Maou na Ore to Fushihimeno Yubiwa Volume 5

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魔王なオレと不死姫（グール）の指輪5
柑橘ゆすら
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イラスト・しゅがすく
か07-01-05
HJ文庫
HOBBY JAPAN

久住奏恵。
突如としてオレの前に現れたのは
正真正銘血の繋がったオレの母さんであった。
（プロローグ）

「おぉ……。怖い怖い。
けど、気の強い女の子は大好きだよ」
「……ッ。外道が！」

「ノエル・ノース・ノーム!
アタシもアンタとは
直接戦いたいって思っていた」
「我が主に危害を加えようとするとは……。
覚悟は出来ているのだろうな?」

富士の樹海に設立された
冥界の門（アビスゲート）――通称、地を這う煉獄（ヘルズ・レッド）付近にて、
二人の魔物使いが対峙していた。
（第三話 ミス魔物っ娘コンテスト）

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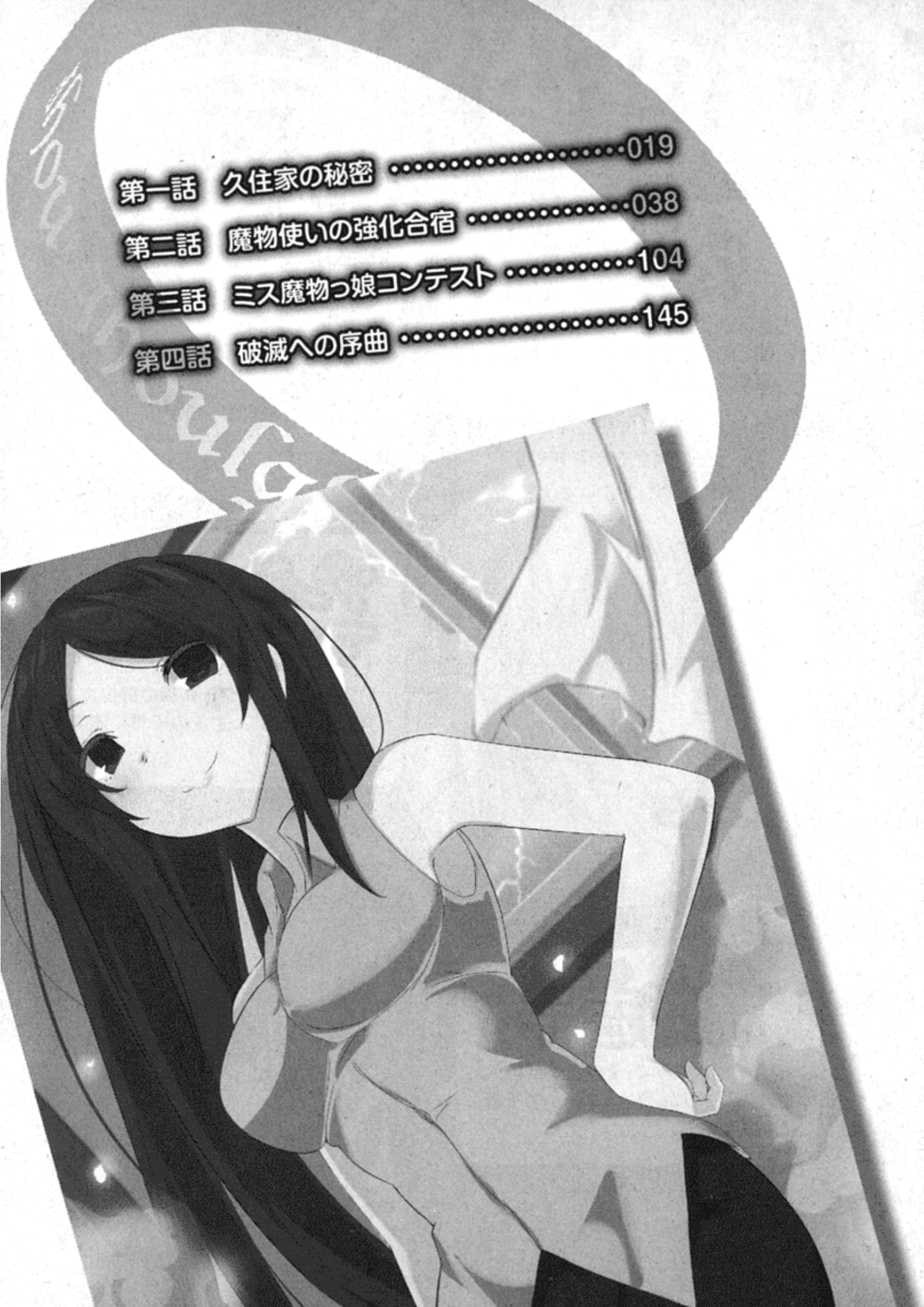

登場人物

久住千春（くすみちはる）

主人公の魔物使い。世界で唯一の人間と魔物の混血種として大きな力に目覚めつつある。

ゾンミ・ラ・マッケンジー

いつもクールな、グール族の美少女。真面目な性格で、主人の千春に忠実に仕える。

黒瀬杏子（くろせきょうこ）

千春の幼なじみで、その正体は巨人族のネフィリム。ゾンミに続いて千春と契約を結ぶ。

アイリス・スカーレッド・リンドブルム

絶滅したとされるレッドドラゴン族の最後の生き残り。外見こそ幼いが強大な力を持つ。

久住愛美（すみまなみ）

千春の妹でスタイル抜群。魔物を超える行動力で千春に迫る、手遅れな感じのブラコン娘。

蛇使いのルカ

千春の元上司。表向き魔物使いの仕事をしつつ、闇の組織「黒の背信者」を創設していた。

リリス・アルテミシア

巨乳のお姉さんで、正体は魔族のサキュバス。千春たち兄妹の過去に詳しいようだが……。

Prologue

When there was just a week left of summer vacation.

Our long trip through the Netherworld finished…. And we returned at last to the human world.

Nevertheless.

Properly speaking, despite the fact that it wouldn't be weird that our spirits reached the max in an instant, facing reality, I honestly wasn't happy.

… Why is it?

Let's try bringing up one of the causes.

Right now, in my home… Zonmi, Kyouko, Iris, and Lilith-san, those four beauties were staying here.

Why are they living at my house as if it was just natural?… I truly can't make heads or tails out of it.

Leaving Zonmi aside, who was originally already freeloading, about the other three it's truly a mystery.

When I tried asking each one for their reasons…

Iris:

'… Dostn't forget. Monster tamer. Art not thou the one who, not long after now, shall become my spouse? Is it so farfetched for two people that shall soon exchange vows to live together?'

Lilith-san:

'Chiharu-sama. Have you forgotten your position? Aren't you someone important, and able (capable) to influence the destiny of the world from now on? What do you intend to do if there's no one to guard you?'

Kyouko:

‘M-me staying here doesn’t have any weird meaning, OK? Just, I mean… Isn't everyone staying at your house, Haru? So… If I’m the only one who doesn’t stay here, won’t the balance crumble…?’

Hearing each one making their own excuse, I got this kind of feeling.

So many people packed into the usually noisy Kusumi residence.

Somehow… I thought that our boisterous days would continue, but things didn’t go by so easy.

The reason was that the one who until now was the noisiest, Manami… Had become very depressed from Zonmi’s confession.

Very unlike her.

Ever since we came back, my sister Manami had completely holed herself in her room.

By the way, ↑ happens to be the second of the causes of me being in low spirits.

Since my sister wouldn't recover her usual mood, I can’t be honestly happy for returning to the human world.

“Hey, Manami. Why don’t you go out?”

“…”

Today once again, I… Though I knocked on my sister’s room, as usual there was no reply from her.

“… Just the breakfast, I’ll leave it here.”

When this morning, like always, I had left the breakfast before my sister’s room’s door.

In fact, it has been three years… I met with that person once again.

“W-what the heck!?”

SHATTER SHATTER

Suddenly, my home’s windows' glasses shatter and a woman comes from the outside.

“Gyaaaaaaaaaaah!?”

The house… The house’s on fire!?

The reason may be the bird monster with a body of flames that woman is riding.

In the game world… This guy is what they call an Immortal bird, isn’t it?

That monster, among the ones I’ve encountered up till now, seemed to possess a magic power of the highest class.

“Hey, hey. What do you say when you meet with someone, Haru-kun?”

“…”

The heck… Am I dreaming?

If there was a third person… They wouldn’t believe that this woman was, rounding it to the tens, about forty.

This more than 170 centimeters tall woman boasting a bust size that doesn’t lose to her daughter Manami.

No matter how you look at her, she just seems to be in her early twenties, a 36 years old (divorced once) with a youthful sex appeal.

Kusumi Kanae.

The one who suddenly appeared before me was my true blood-related mother.

“But, hey… The house! The house’s on fire! Strictly speaking , isn’t there still loan to pay!?”

“Whaaat. That? Haru-kun, you’re a worrywart like always. Tei!”

“!?”

Right after mom snapped her fingers.

Something unbelievable happened.

My house, which until now was engulfed in flames, returned to how it was in an instant.

“My Torippee is a monster that rules over death and rebirth. It would mostly be that he can return anything to how it was?”

“A-amazing… That…”

Or perhaps, is Torippee the name of that Immortal bird?

Being that I’ve a contract with Zonmi, it’s not like I’m one to talk, but I feel that no matter how cool the monster is, the name makes everything come to naught.

“Well, but he couldn’t revert my relationship with that man to how it was…”

“…”

Mom muttered while looking into the distance.

That man… Must be Manami’s father, Kamiigusa Yuuto.

As it came from my divorced mom, it wass an awfully crude line.

“You there… Why couldn’t you come back normally!?”

“… No, if I had just entered normally from the front door, it wouldn’t have had any impact.”

“Who are you concerned for!?”

Am I over thinking?

I'm sure I've made the same retort before.

"That's good and all, but… I'm back, Haru-kun."

"Welcome back, mom."

"…"

"…"

Feeling a bad premonition, I, step by step, walked backwards so as to distance myself from mom.

Mom, so that I didn't escape, advanced matching my movements.

A bad feeling made me sweat all over my body.

To be frank, speaking about my mom's bad qualities, she has a personality, on par with Manami's, of a doting mother to the point of a'Jocasta complex' on a level to make the ladies from the neighborhood spread indecent rumors.

"Ufufu. Haru-kun. Why are you running away? Well?"

"Back to you, mom… Why are you approaching?"

"It's that, you see… Well?"

Right after mom showed a bewitching smile.

"Haru-nyan! I wuw u!"

HUUUUUGGG

My head was pressed against my mom's breasts.

"!?"

I can't believe it.

Though it's like this, since going on a trip to the Netherworld and awakening my limiter, I thought that, as it is, I had acquired my true power (?) as a monster tamer, but… Mom's movements just now, I couldn't even follow them with my eyes!?

Said like this it may sound like a joke, but when I came to, it seemed as if I had been teleported to mom's boobs.

Now that I mention it, Lilith-san had told me.

Mom was one of the ten people who reached the position of high class monster tamers and her true power was such that she was called a "living legend".

It was when I was experiencing first-hand the boundless true power of mom.

"Mommyyyyyyyyyyy!!"

BANG

The sound of a door being opened with force.

Looking to the source of the noise, Manami was dashing out of her room at full throttle.

Perhaps because she had been for three days straight living as a hikikomori, her body let out a faint sweaty smell, but this time I'll let it pass.

And.

Dashing at full power in the hallway, my sister, like that, embraced my mother sandwiching me in-between.

"!?"

Impending breast pressure. A pleasure Explosion.

*HUHUUU

Caught by the pressure of the ripe W of breasts, I… Harbored quite indescribable mixed feelings.

The heck.

This… Homemade oyakodon development…

Though I've used "homemade" to name this painful to hear situation, in some sense I think that's unusual.

"The one I love the most in the world after Haru-kun, Mana-tan."

"The one I love the most in the world after oniichan, Kana-tan."

"… Ein?"

"… Oin?"

"Erm… You two… Could you not fight each other before me?"

A fight between my blood-related mother and sister concerning me… It's not like I've kept up with the times, but…

“… Chiharu! What’s with this!?”

And, in the end, hearing the uproar, Zonmi and the rest came.

… Somehow, I feel that if I don’t ask now, I’ll start with Zonmi and the rest’s introductions to my mother and I’ll miss the chance.

That’s why, I… asked the question I’ve been thinking since before of making her without fail if I met mom.

“Mom. There’s something I want you to tell me.”

“Whaat? Haru-kun. If that’s what you wish, Haru-kun, ask mom anything.”

“… I want you to tell me about my father.”

Chapter 1 - The secret of the Kusumi household

Let's start from the results.

He who once brought the human world's culture to the Netherworld, regarded by many as a human lover, the 47th Maou—Cruel.

It seems that my dad was the one once addressed as the Netherworld's Maou.

… Er.

How should I feel being suddenly told that?

However, the Limiters that usually manifested until now when I was in a pinch.

Those could be said to totally overwhelm just about any other monsters.

In other words… Sadly, this overwhelming power of mine, if we assume it was inherited from the former maou, so as far as it goes it would be logical even if I had manifested an incredible power.

"… Did Lilith-san know about this?"

"…"

Was that right after we arrived to the Netherworld?

Lilith-san took me once to the study used by the former maou.

The portrait of the maou I saw at that time.

If I think of it now, the character in that picture could have been my real father.

This isn't anything but my own guess.

Lilith-san… Perhaps, she invited me to that room knowing I was the child of the maou.

"I beg your pardon.

I thought you should be told at some time, but… In the end I had doubts about if you should hear it from my mouth."

"… Is that so?"

However, this settled it.

It's not like I doubt mom's words, but having it confirmed by Lilith-san, who's a Demon too, increased the persuasiveness.

As I thought, it unmistakably seems that my dad was the maou that once ruled over the Netherworld.

"I-I can't believe it. That Haru's dad was the maou of the Netherworld…"

"Kyouko…"

The one left most open-mouthed by this fact was my childhood friend Kyouko.

It may be… Maybe learning that I'm the child of the maou, to Kyouko is terribly shocking.

Why's that?

If you learn that the lineage of the childhood friend you've been attached to for so many long years is so unique, anyone would suffer a shock.

In practice.

My astonishment from when I learned that Kyouko was in reality a Nephilim from the giant tribe could be said without a doubt to be one of the top five surprises of my life.

"… J-just if. If I manage to get engaged with Haru, from tomorrow on I would be filthy rich!?"

"Give me back my concern!?"

I envy that pointlessly positive mentality of yours.

"Kyouko-sama. Regrettably, I think that that idea is too hasty."

"? What do you mean?"

“Chiharu-sama’s father. Maou Cruel was known to be a big lecher, and the number of heirs he left exceeds 20.

In other words… Who, with the unclear situation of Cruel-sama’s inheritance, would take the risk of marrying Chiharu-sama for money and social status?”

“You too, Lilith-san… Could you not say cruel things nonchalantly?”

Grrr.

Each and every one of them takes me… As an ATM machine installed on a seven-eleven.

“…”

“Oi. Manami. Stop looking at me with that outspoken glance that says ‘Haah… Twenty babieees? If oniichan had such a sex drive Manami too would by now have made blankety-blank with oniichan’! No matter how much of a sex drive I have, how would I cross the line with you!?”

“A-amazing! Oniichan! Manami hasn’t said a word yet and you’ve said by yourself the foolishness and the retort!?

Moreover, how come you knew word by word without a mistake what Manami was thinking!? Are you an esper!?”

“…”

So you were thinking it?

But I didn’t expect getting it right word by word.

“““…”””

Contrasting with the varied reactions of Kyouko and Manami (the human world team) before the fact of me being the maou’s child, Zonmi and Iris’s (the Netherworld team) response was of utter calmness.

"Zonmi, doesn't it surprise you? That my father was the maou."

"… Yes. Of course I'm surprised. However, would it be because I too was born into the royalty? I don't know if we can say that's why, but I think that the feeling of something special when meeting other royals is thinner (not as big of a deal?) than with the little sister and the rest."

"… So it was like that?"

"Besides… To tell you the truth, I had a vague hunch about who was Chiharu's father."

"For reals!?"

"… Yeah. The adulterous tendencies of the former maou are somewhat well-known at the Netherworld, and the appearance of your limiter played a major part.

It even may be that your adulterous tendencies have been inherited from the former maou at a genetic level… That was what I have been thinking for a while."

"…"

The eyes of Zonmi, who matter-of-factly stated this, didn't hold a glimpse of a smile.

Since prying down further was likely to wake up sleeping dogs, as if running away I brought up the topic to Iris.

"… Iris too doesn't look surprised… Could it be, you had also noticed?"

"Indeed… That's what I'd like to say, but grievously thy inkling is off."

"? You don't look very surprised, though."

"… Humph! From the beginning I wasn't interested in the least by thy upbringing."

Iris, letting out a fearless laughter, said that and tightly grabbed my hand.

… This way of gripping hands; entwining fingers, I think it's what's commonly called holding hands.

"Monster tamer. The subject of my interest is none other than thou thyself.

After all is said and done, thou art bound with me by an eternal pledge… The man who shall become my lifelong partner."

"…"

Aah.

Did it start again, Iris's marriage proclamation?

It only came out to light recently, but Iris is 12 years old.

Thought Iris has been told before about the marriageable age according to the human world laws… The person herself doesn't seem to care about such a thing.

Since when we were traveling through the Netherworld, we all have heard those words many a time, we weren't especially surprised, but… Mom was taken aback by that speech.

"… O-oh, noes! Has Haru-kun become a cradle snatcher!?"

With her teeth clattering, mom's face was of utter despair.

The one who took action then as if to beat the dead body was Zonmi.

"Mother. I have something to say about that."

"… Yes? Mother? Eh? When have I become your mother? Mm?"

“To tell the truth, I, like that red dragon over there, am betrothed to Chiharu. To add things to that, my family has already completely agreed to my marriage with Chiharu. About Chiharu… I think that he’s not so against marrying me.

So then, mother! Please, will you acknowledge my marriage with Chiharu?”

“…”

Mom, receiving Zonmi’s speech, ended up with a face that looked like a photo version of Munch’s “The Scream”.

“Erm… Kanae-san. There’s one thing I too want to consult with you…”

And, the one who acted then like throwing a *Tomahawk* on the dead body was my childhood friend Kyouko.

“D-don’t make a mistake! I’ll tell you from the start that it’s not like I hold romantic feelings for Chiharu-kun[1]"

“Haah… You’ve grown into quite the classical type of character, haven’t you, Kyouko-chan…”

“But… Err… If the other two have proposed marriage and only I don’t, don’t you think it’s unbalanced? So, I want you to also acknowledge my marriage with Chiharu-kun…”

“…”

It came out!

Kyouko’s lost balance theory!

I think it’s very meaningful in a sense for Kyouko to base one of the most important events of one’s life like a proposal with the preposterous reason of “since I feel that it’s unbalanced”.

Mom, receiving Kyouko's speech, had her face pale like a zombie's and went to the living-room's bookshelf with an unsteady gait.

It's natural that mom has received such a shock.

Not only has her own son received a proposal by a monster girl, which is already a shocking development, it happened thrice in a row.

In the end, mom took all of the books on the shelf out and scattered them on the table.

"Mother. What the heck…?"

On the cover of one of the books carelessly scattered on the table, 'Haru-kun's growth record, part 1' was written with a black pen.

It seems these books… Go from 1 to 20.

Keeping her silence before Zonmi's inquiry, mom flipped the pages of 'Haru-kun's growth record, part 1'.

And, it was covered full with photos of me since birth (about a year?).

"Nuu… W-what's with this obscenity!?"

"T-these are Chiharu's…"

"Kanae-san!? Stop at that page! Aah. Don't flip them so fast!"

Though it's only natural, among the photos of the newly born me there were photos of me naked mixed in.

Though it was from when I was around a year old, it's embarrassing that others see you naked.

"… If I'm not wrong, it was around here. Fufufu. I was right leaving it here for such a thing."

Along with those meaningful words, mom produced a piece of paper from inside the album.

What's… That there!

I, kusumi chiharu, when I grow up I will marry mommy.

A sentence written in a round, childish calligraphy.

"Erm… Mom. What the heck…? I don't have any recollection of that."

"Isn't that natural? This is from before you entered kindergarten, Haru-kun… Specifically, I made you write this while I was teaching you the letters."

"Why… Doing this?"

"Of course! I feared that this day would come.

Having my dearest son taken from me by a thieving cat from who-knows-where… I absolutely won't allow it!"

"Erm… Surely your joking? It's scary that you even nonchalantly made the by then still a child me to put my fingerprint on it to make it look official."

"Don't you understand? The only one with the right to marry you is me, your own mother!"

"…"

BLAM Mom hit the table and made a fervent speech.

Eeerm.

What the heck is this person saying.

Why don't we put in order this situation for now?

If a little while back I thought I was engaged in marriage to monster girls, now even my own mother has proposed to me.

Hmm.

It still doesn't make sense to me?

It's so disgusting that even a snail would run away on two feet sensing the danger.

"Wait theeeeeeere!"

And, the one who suddenly came out with that shout was my sister, Manami.

I-I beg you.

I was at fault. Please spare me.

No more, I've had enough of this.

I'm as fed up as if I had put mayo over seabura tonkotsu ramen.

"If we go with that theory, the only one who has the right to marry oniichan is his own blood-related sister, Manami! Oniichan! Look!"

"!?"

I, Kusumi Chiharu, pledge here to marry my dearest sister, Manami.

Saying that, Manami held out a document that, sure enough, has that written.

"Hold your horses. Manami. This sentence, it looks like it was written recently, but… How come I don't remember it in the least!?"

"That, it's obvious!

I mean, knowing that this document would come handy one day, Manami, by herself, wrote it in a handwriting resembling oniichan's!"

"Isn't that totally no good!?"

Rather, you two, how come you have that self-satisfied look while flaunting those documents without any legal binding whatsoever!?

"… Hey. You two, could you let me see those documents for a bit?"

"Haru-kun. Mom is glad! Have you decided at last to marry mom?"

"Oniichan. Manami's glad! Have you decided at last to marry your sister?"

With a smile, as I received the documents from the two,

"… (*RIP RIP RIP RIP*)"

Like that, I vigorously ripped them in halves.

"Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah"

"Gyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah"

"…"

These guys. Really noisy.

"Haru-kun, you sadistic!"

"Oniichan, you brute!"

"It's vexing"

"However"

““What blisssssss

Certainly, if we go by mom's true power, it's understandable that she has been bestowed with the important task (?) of protecting me.

"Ufufu. Are you glad? Hey. Are you glad?"

In a good mood, mom pinched my cheeks.

"…"

However… What's with this uneasy feeling?

In the end, perhaps I long to return back to a normal household…

If I keep thinking about it, I'll feel like I've lost, so I'll stop thinking.

"… Well. Though it's not like that's the sole reason I came."

Phoenix **LV**: 38

Physical strength: S
Power: A
Speed: S

Immortal bird monster.

Once its life comes to an end, it reincarnates.

Its flames wont go down even if water is thrown.

Serial number: ???

Chapter 2 - Monster tamer's training camp

Meh, let’s skip all that yadda-yadda.

It’s been decided that we’ll be entering an open training camp for monster tamers.

What in the world are the details to end with such a crazy development?

For now, let’s go into detail.

The dispute of “who will marry me?” that occurred when mom suddenly came back home intensified disregarding the will of the person in question.

Then, planning to somehow coping with the situation, mom suggested “we’ll participate in the training camp for newbie monster tamers held tomorrow, and then if you become the MVP you can engage in a relationship with my son, under the condition that it’s just platonic, without physical relations”.

And so we reach the present.

I’d have liked to retort “no matter how platonic you say the relationship is, how can you let your own son to go out with a monster girl!?”, but, if I think about it, mom has had a child with a demon.

… In regards to that, no comments.

Perhaps to mom there’s little difference between a human girl and a monster girl.

I don’t want to boast, but I’d say that the Kusumi household… Compete for the first-second world ranking for families with open-mindnessness towards romance between humans and monsters I think.

… It’s really nothing to boast about!

Next day. 7 in the morning.

Before me, who had woken up early to participate in the camp, appeared someone I missed.

“Wassup! Chiharu! Long time no see!”

“Oo… Youhei?”

When I opened the entryway’s door (front door?), there was my familiar spiky-head classmate.

It was Sakurazaka Youhei.

“Oioi. Chiharu, yoh—.

Though it’s our long-awaited summer vacation, where have you been until now? No matter how many times I called your cell, it wouldn’t connect. Dont’cha see you had me really worried?”

“… Ahaha. Sorry, sorry.”

I just went to the Netherworld for a bit.

That, of course I couldn’t add.

Nonetheless, it really has been a long time, isn’t it?

Last time I saw Youhei would be… At the yo-yo balloon fishing booth for the Saegusa festival.

“Then, Youhei, what brings you here so early in the morning?”

When I inquired, Youhei, with a face that said “nice of you for asking!”,

“Kukuku. Chiharu. Don’t say anything and just look this!”

“…Mm. What’s this?”

Saying that, Youhei took out a DVD with the raunchy title of ‘Do you like pretty female college students? YES! Big breasted maid’s ecchi service!’

“Iya~. I went through great pains to grab a hold of it.

Being Chiharu, of course you know, don’t you? The shocking AV debut work of the girl who was formerly from that famous idol group! Right after it went into sale, it sold out and it’s sold on the internet at a premium price of ten times its market value!?”

“I-Is that so…”

What would you call beauties and what would you call big breasts?

It’s not like I had any complaint against the woman on the package.

I just think that if we speak of beauty, its not like her features are neater than Zonmi's, Kyouko's or Iris's, and if we talk about big breasts, she’s not on the level of Manami, mom and Lilith-san.

“… Fuh! It may be foolish to explain so much to you who has the data of over a hundred thousand porn mags stored into his head, nicknamed Adult Index.

Of course, being Chiharu, you’ll know this much, won’t you?”

“Ah, yeaaah…”

I must not tell.

I must not tell him that, having all of my porn mags and DVDs disposed of by the hands of Zonmi, I’ve completely quitted that hobby.

“What, no ‘sorry but could you lend it to me’? Let’s go to your room now for an appreciation meeting!”

“Wait!? Now!?”

Since today I have some important business… Right when I was about to stop him with that, I noticed something weird.

The Youhei that till just a while ago was hyped up trying to come into the entryway was like… When the AV you've rented thinking that there were high schoolgirls… As you play it on your home TV, there are mature women.

That… Grim expression of someone who has suffered personally the absurdity of this world…

"? Chiharu-sama. Is there a guest?"

"…"

Lilith-san, wearing as usual a maid outfit, tilted her head as if puzzled.

Thought it's a scene that I've grown quite accustomed to, for a third person who doesn't know what's going on it seems it's a bit too stimulating.

"Boobs… Boobs, boobs, boobs!"

"Calm down, Youhei! Can't you speak nothing but boobs!?"

"Chichichi-Chiharu! What's this, oi!? Could it be that big-breasted pretty maids do exist in reality!?"

"… Chiharu. A guest? I'll never thought that but, have you forgotten today's plans?"

"Oniichan, don't bring unknown people home!"

"…"

Naturally it's the natural development.

Noticing the disturbance, after Lilith-san, all the residents of the Kusumi home appeared before us one after another.

Confronted with this scene, Youhei, as if he had gotten a revelation… With a face tinged with sorrow,

"… Chiharu.

I, y'know… Have been wondering since long ago.

Why, though they say you can't buy porn mags until you become 18… If you are still a virgin when you become 18 they make a fool of you.

I… Having had a conduct more irreproachable than no one…

Protecting my chastity even though I'm not an idol…

…

……

That's right.

I'm not the one who's wrong! It's the world!

Fufufufu. Fuhahahahahaha!"

"C-calm down Youhei! Your eyes are totally glassy!?"

Just when I calmly pointed that, Youhei's expression was gradually filled with despair,

"Ugaaa

Someone like you… Someone like you is not humaaaaaaan!”

“Gohaah!?”

For some reason, he hit me.

… No, y’know?

As Youhei said, surely could it be that I’m not human?

But, y’know, if you tell me so directly, of course even I will be hurt!?

“…”

Though my body that has monster cells healed in a blink the damage from Youhei’s punch, my psyche, which after all it’s just that of a kid, will take some time to patch up.

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“Oh, we’re here, we’re here.”

We, who have entered the monster tamer training camp on mom’s suggestion, are at Fujinomiya town, in the Shizuoka prefecture.

We’ve reached Mt. Fuji’s foot.

Though I feel that if you looked it up on the net, to arrive here from Tokyo it seems that it’d take quite the time and money, that’s where being a tamer comes handy.

If we ride on Kyouko’s back, fully transformed into a Nephilim, naturally travel costs are free.

Looking down from an altitude of several hundred meters, we could already discern a group of people that appeared to be the participants on the camp.

At a glance, the young boys and girls looked peaceful and harmonious, it doesn’t feel strict.

There were quite more people than I had expected.

There are currently approximately around 300 people gathered.

“Haru. Do I descend around here?”

“That’s right. Please do.”

As soon as I said that, Kyouko started dropping in altitude.

Then, from the dark dots we could see on the ground, for some reason we could hear cries of commotion.

“Uwah!? What’s with that monster!? It’s suddenly coming down from the sky!?”

“Hey. Could it be that monster is a Nephilim!? I saw it in the Monsterpedia!”

“Don’t joke… A Nephilim, you say… That’s not a monster a newbie can make a pact with… !?”

“…”

It seems that Kyouko and me are the core topic.

I didn’t know.

Are Nephilim such powerful monsters that would become an obvious topic of conversation between monster tamers?

Surely, since I’ve been saved many times by Kyouko’s battle prowess, if we speak of understanding, I understand it, but…

“Haru. It’s around here.”

“Yeah. So it seems.”

Following Kyouko’s instructions, I jumped down from the Nephilim’s back.

After that, Zonmi, Iris, Lilith-san and Manami also jumped down from Kyouko’s back.

“Whaaaaat. Since I’d heard it was a monster tamer training camp, I went and came, but there’s no one that looks strong, isn’t there, oniichan?”

“… And you, an ordinary person, says that?”

Nevertheless.

Sincerely speaking, I feel like what my sister has said is not necessarily wrong.

The monsters the tamers that appear to be the camp participants have brought with them don’t look strong in the least.

Like a monster with a slime-like shape or a giant bat that is two meters long.

They give the vibe of the small fry that comes out in the dungeon of the starting quest of an RPG.

By the way, sister.

Since you stuck with us like it was just only natural, not even I had noticed until just now, but why are you here!?

“… Humph! I concur with what little sister-kun has just said. I can’t feel from the fellows gathered here even one thousandth of thy magic power.

Being in such a place is just a waste of time.”

“Erm… Iris-san? Could you please stop with the statements that look for a fight promptly after arriving?”

Even though I thought of making tamer friends since I'm participating in this event… Being so badly conspicuous will spoil everything.

But, however.

Other than my worries, somehow it seems that there’s an unexpected source of antagonism.

“I mean, why does this guy, despite being a newbie monster tamer, has that many contracted monsters?”

“No, no. What’s more envious is the level of the girls around him! What’s with that pretty girl squad!? I thought they were an idol group or something…”

“No matter how much I think, he’s chosen his monsters based on looks. Really, he’s the worst.”

“Gueh. For reals? Scary… Don’t come near.”

“…”

Uheh.

Despite not even a minute having pass since arriving, I couldn’t avoid this…

… I’m not one to talk, but I’m astonished of my negative image.

Could it be that making friends out of my fellow monster tamers is nothing but a pipedream?

That presentiment crossed my mind before five minutes had passed since reaching our destination.

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Thirty minutes later.

After a simple opening greeting, at last the monster tamers training camp started.

Letting the outsiders Lilith-san and Manami go rest beforehand at the cottage reserved as our lodging for tonight, we started with the real training.

“Hello, kouhai-kun! I’m the one who will give you man-to-man guidance over this camp, Asakura Yuina♪”

“Y-yes. Please take care of me.”

It seems that this camp has a system where each group receives guidance from a middle class monster tamer senpai, and the objective is for the newbies to clear the three tasks they're given.

… Then, if we speak about why I receive one-to-one guidance from a middle class monster tamer senpai, as you can guess, it's because I’m being avoided by my fellow tamers.

As I couldn’t even find one newbie to form a group with, I’ve been forced to make a one-man group.

To give a simple to understand example… It feels like when, unable to find someone to pair with during gym class, you’re forced to pair with the teacher.

“I’ve heard rumours about you! Aren’t you that legendary monster tamer… Kusumi Kanae’s son!?”

“… Do you know about mom?”

“Of course!”

GRAB Followed Yuina-san as she grabbed both my hands.

At any rate, from a while ago, this person… Has been in pointlessly high spirits.

And the distance she takes when talking is awfully close.

Due to her speaking from nearly point-blank range, I could see Yuina-san’s cleavage from the neck of her shirt, but since it’s rather convenient for me, I better keep silent.

“Kanae-san is said to be the strongest even among the currently ten high rank monster tamers… She’s the person I admire.

She’s a woman with such a strength without comparison that once she even displayed by herself a battle power matching that of two thousand monster tamers.

Hey, say. Kouhai-kun? Once this camp ends, could you get me Kanae-san’s autograph!?”

"… Ah. Yes. No problem."

"Really!? Thaaaaaanks!"

"!?"

Overcome with emotion, Yuina-san *HUG* hugged me.

Amazing…!!

This is, not a monster's… Not my blood-related relative's… The feeling of a normal girl's breasts… Isn't it… !?

Yuina-san… If we compare her with the girls around me, like Zonmi or Kyouko, the level of her looks fares a bit poorly, but conversely she was a girl whose simple cuteness becomes her charming point.

So to speak… The face of a pretty but not too pretty girl?

If Zonmi or Kyouko are peerless beauties chosen from an audition of tens of thousands people, Yuina-san would be of the type which there are two or three at every school… The extremely commonplace pretty girl you'd find anywhere.

This kind of down-to-earth cuteness personally touches quite deep my heartstrings…

"""""…"""""

Between this and that, to me… This could be the first time in my life that I've been able to enjoy the sensation of a normal human girl that's not a monster or family.

From behind me I felt a frightening magical power filled with murder intent.

"… W-wrong? This is… You're wrong?"

“Yes? But I have not said anything yet… Why so alarmed? Could it be you are self-aware of having done something wrong?”

“No… It’s not like that…”

“It’s fine. Since it’s not like you’ve done nothing wrong, Haru, why don’t you have more confidence? It’s fine. Since it’s not like you’ve done nothing wrong, Haru.”

“…”

“Kukkuku. Monster tamer. If thou sayest to not deem your business… Thou canst keep being entranced by those two lumps of fat. But then… That choice may cost thou thy life.”

“… I’m deeply sorry.”

Unable to endure the pressure from the three monsterettes, I kowtowed with enough force to sink the ground.

“???”

As if amazed by my action, Yuina-san tilted her head.

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“… I see. We have to move this container to the place that flag is set up?”

Having started with the camp, our first assigned task was a test of power and stamina.

Before our eyes there’s currently an iron container of about three hundred kilos of weight and two meters long in all its sizes.

It seems that if we manage to bring this container to a place in the mountainside where a flag is set up, we’ll clear the mission.

“That’s right♪ Of course, you must cooperate with your monster partners! However… Be careful since there’s a time limit.”

“… Time limit?”

“Yup. The distance since this starting point to the mountainside is around 3,000 meters I wonder?

The time allotted to newbie monster tamers is one day. In other words, if you can’t take it to the goal in exactly 24 hours from now, keep in mind that you’ll be disqualified on the spot.”

“… Understood.”

Though it is a hard trial, believe it or not, we’ve been put through many ordeals.

With us four’s strength, I think that we shouldn’t be disqualified for running out of time.

As if foreseeing my internal relief, Yuina-san *fufufu* let out a suspicious jiggle.

“By the way, every year 3 out of 10 newbies retire at this trial.

The fastest record left by past newbie monster tamers was 1 minute 20 seconds… However, since the one who left this record was Kanae-san and she's a legend, you don't have to mind it.

As further reference, I'll tell you that the average among mid class monster tamers is around 4 hours. The average time for top class monster tamers is about 10 minutes. Since, upon the completion of this task, kouhai-kun may be promoted, fight on!"

"Understood."

Newbie monster tamers, 24 hours.

Mid class monster tamers, 4 hours. Top class monster tamers, 10 minutes?

There's quite the time difference between ranks.

"Leave this to me!"

As I was carefreely thinking about those things, Kyouko stepped up without hesitation in an awfully forceful manner.

"OK. I don't mind."

Thinking about it, entrusting Kyouko, who excels in power the most among us four, may be what makes the most sense.

After this there are two more trials left.

If we entrust Kyouko completely with this trial, my other monsters may preserve their strength for the oncoming trials.

"Ehehe. It's my time to shine… Look at this!"

After announcing that, Kyuoko took off the bracelet she was wearing in her arm and tossed it up.

What now.

The bracelet changed shapes in a flash and became a giant halberd.

“Aaah. Now that you mention it, there was that option, wasn’t it?”

Still… That was from when I fell into the big pinch of my three partners, Zonmi, Kyouko and Iris, trying to make a contract with me by force.

Somehow it feels it was very long ago… It’s the same as when Kyouko used this halberd to send a huge truck flying.

So, Kyouko thrust the halberd against the container, made it turn in midair,

"Secret technique: moonsault!"

She yelled in a loud voice.

Uwah. I missed it so much that tears came out.

“!?”

And, while I was lost in nostalgic remembrances, something surprising happened.

The iron container that Kyouko had thrown into the air, with the same momentum went up without falling. It went up. It went up.

BEKIBEKI!

The tossed container, drawing a nice parabola, hit the flag that acted as a landmark and utterly smashed it.

“““““““ ”””””””

Everyone present became dumbfounded.

This Kyouko… She's been polishing her trademark power and it's higher than before.

"Fufun♪ And? Have you gotten a better opinion of me? With this I'll win the MVP of the camp!"

"For real?…"

Surely, this… Is this the trial that takes a day for your typical newbie monster tamer?

"Yuina-san. By the way, what's the time?"

"E-ermmm… 1 minute 24 seconds!? T-this… is incredible!"

"Che. I didn't reach Kanae-san's time?"

"How disappointing. Four seconds more? Had you cut the useless chatter at the start, you could have supassed it."

"Well, even if you fuss over the record, it can't be helped. And that record, Kanae must have set it back when she was a newbie monster tamer."

"… Eh? Eh? You lot! How can you be so calm!? Even though I think it was just by chance, haven't you just set up a record that will be recorded in the monster tamers' history!?"

"Eeeh. But I rather than the record… Want to be recorded as precious in Haru's mind."

"… Were you trying to say something clever!?"

"Ouch!"

As Kyouko has gotten carried away by the good mark she had struck, I flicked her forehead.

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The second task we were assigned was a trial of resilience and presence of mind.

The rules are simple.

Roughly, it's like a treasure search game where we have to retrieve a magic power stone hidden in the depths of a cave.

Moreover, the cave was filled with traps and, according to Yuina-san, the level of difficulty was on a whole new level compared with the first task.

"… Chiharu. Could you please leave this to me?"

"Understood. This time it's Zonmi's turn."

Well, suitable, what we call suitable, she is.

Though since my biggest concern is the development where someone gets injured by one of the traps of the cave, in Zonmi's case, who has the recovery ability of the undead tribe, that's no worry.

"Kouhai-kun. Since a while ago, haven't you been relying too much on girls?"

"… I have faith in them."

To the question Yuina-san asked me with eyes of contempt, I spat a sentence that'd make me look good.

"Fu-n. Well, I think that what you need right now, kouhai-kun, is some margin.

This second task that kouhai-kun is about to challenge, the newbie monster tamers able to clear it each year are 5 out of 10, and moreover only less than one percent at the worst clear it unscathed.

Before a task where, if you become just a bit careless, at worst you'll lose your life, we'll see how much can kouhai-kun's monster advance."

“…”

Even if you say you’ll lose your life… Firstly, against the ghoul clan who's about half-dead, I don’t think that’s so much a threat.

And, if possible, I’d like to think this was a misunderstanding.

Am I thinking too much of it?

Since we’ve seen Kyouko’s recent feat, I don’t feel like it strengthens Yuina-san’s prediction.

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Since then, we waited about an hour.

“Fuu… It has taken me more time than I thought.”

From inside the cave, we heard Zonmi’s voice.

“That’s… Eh? Even though just an hour or so has passed since the start… You say you’ve already cleared it!?”

Yuina-san, raising a shocked voice, cast a side glance at Zonmi, who appeared with magic power stone in hand.

“… He?”

“… Heyhey.”

Of course we were taken aback.

All over Zonmi’s body, for some reason… Axes, knifes, arrows, spears.

Pieced by a high number of all sorts of lethal weapons from every age and place, it looked so ghastly that you'll unconsciously try to mosaic it.

What the heck has happened here… Having known Zonmi for a long time, I understood.

After all, the cave's interior is dim.

Not having a sense of pain, Zonmi, without noticing herself that she had activated the traps, should have found the treasure inside the cave.

As a result, she's become like a new species of land urchin… Or so.

"You have guts to trick people, middle rank monster tamer. There weren't any traps nowhere, you know?"

Said Zonmi covered from head to toe in blood and with her innards leaking out.

"Hii!?"

Staring at a so disgusting appearance, Yuina-san's legs unconsciously gave up and she fell to the ground.

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"… Kukuku. Kusumi Chiharu. You've become conceited. I'll kill you. You… Some day I'll kill you."

The last task was a trial of overall combat power.

It was a one-on-one direct confrontation with the middle rank monster tamer in charge.

However, since a true one-on-one is very disadvantageous to the newbie monster tamer, it seems that it could be cleared just by making the opponent fall down once.

If we speak about Yuina-san's condition, as you see, it clearly has suffered a sudden change compared to when we first met.

Even though before she called me "kouhai-kun♥" in a friendly way and smiling like an angel, now she called me by name. By my full name, at that.

Even I, who's slandered as thickheaded by those around me, could somehow guess the reason for Yuina-san's complete change.

Since, despite being no more than a newbie monster tamer, I have been doing nothing but setting records until now, Yuina-san's pride as a middle rank monster tamer has been hurt.

"Summon—ogre."

So, Yuina-san, oozing with animosity, summoned a huge giant monster.

From head to toe, it would measure around 7 meters?

It was a full impact monster brandishing an axe.

I see.

Really different from the monster contracted to the newbie monster tamers that I saw before at the entrance ceremony.

Yuina-san's summoned monster was just what you'd expect from a mid rank monster tamer and it looks like it has quite the combat power.

"Monster tamer. Shan't thou leave this to me?"

"…"

Well. Yeah.

I think that if we go by turns, it's so.

However, of all people, for it to be my strongest contracted monster, Iris's, turn with this timing…

"… All yours, but could you please just make it fall? Don't go all out too much?"

"Umu. I know."

Hearing our conversation, Yuina-san directed us a smile of self-sufficience.

"… Aha. Kouhai-kun. Isn't this a mistaken choice?"

"… It could be."

As I meekly affirmed it, Yuina-san returned to the same angelic smile from our first meeting.

"Well♥ There's no helping it. I'll let that little girl to become Oo-chan's opponent.

This is why you are a beginner.

Oo-chan. Don't be too serious and cut kouhai-kun's cutie some sl… eh, ogyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

"…"

That… finished in a blink of time.

The flames spewed by Iris engulfed Oo-chan the ogre whole in a flash and rendered it unable to fight in no time.

"Erm… Senpai. Don't let it bother you. I'd dare say that it's we who are abnormal, not you who is weak…"

I told some comforting words to my senpai, who has burst into tears from the shock.

However, somehow it seems that my comforting backlashed and instead hurt senpai's pride even more.

"Buuuu. No more! I… Had I known I would be in charge of such kids, I'd have rather not come to the camp…"

Said Yuina-san with tearful eyes.

“Remember this! You… Monster fetish pervert harem boy!”

“…”

Monster fetish you say.

I’m not one to talk, but that’s a mean thing to say.

Even I, if possible, would rather… Date someone like you, a regular cute human girl…

This time I somehow silently awoke to the revelation of “my popularity is limited to just monster girls and blood-related family”.

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Having finished in less than two hours the program originally scheduled for a week, I went to the cottage prepared as our lodging.

Zonmi, Kyouko and Iris, it seems that those three have some monster-exclusive additional curriculum, and though we had planned to take another course of action, it’s difficult to think that any assassin would come aiming for my body.

Still, due to the stance of it being to make double sure, until I reach the cottage, Zonmi will be at my side.

“Nevertheless… We’ve finished too soon. The monster tamer training camp…”

Though the things to lose were many, I don’t think there was anything to be gained.

“That too can’t be helped.

Although your title, Chiharu, is that of a newbie monster tamer, I believe your true power is already close to that of a high rank monster tamer.”

“Mmmm. Is that so?”

Actually, around where would my true power rank among monster tamers?

I can’t quite grasp the position.

In my case, the foe I fought against first… The black suited man was someone who could already be called a high rank monster tamer, such intuition left me utterly stupefied.

“For newbie monster tamers to take the promotion test, they need at least one year of experience. Being you, Chiharu… Once you finish your training period, you can be promoted in no time to a high rank monster tamer.”

“That’d be good.”

By the way, what kind of life do those people who work as monster tamers lead?

I went and asked that to Lilith-san.

The people who become monster tamers, eventually everyone without exception gets affiliated to a phantom company that belongs to the IMA, and socially wise they earn a social position no different from that of your regular black collar worker.

There’s also the thing where newbie monster tamers, for a year, receive no wages as (during) their training period, but after that, it becomes so they are entitled to receive wages according to their personal ability or something?

If they become high class monster tamers, it seems they’ll receive a remuneration on par with the CEO of a company listed on Tokyo Stock Exchange’s First Section (around 10,000,000 yen of annual income?).

…I have nothing to say about such an excessively realist amount of money.

On top of such a fairy-tale-like occupation as monster tamer actually existing, in many ways it brings livelihood.

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“Welcome home, hubby.”

After bidding farewell to Zonmi, I arrived at the cottage we are lodging in.

I casually opened the cottage’s door.

“Hubby. Will it be Manami? Will it be MANAMI? Or will it be ma-na-mi?”

So, what first entered into my view when I entered the room was my sister wearing a naked apron as if it was a natural thing.

“… What are you doing?”

When I inquired with a look of contempt, Manami *JIGGLE* puffed her chest.

“I thought ‘No~ I’ve been forever stuck in the little sister role~’.

So for today, Manami has decided to change the plan and act as the loving newlywed wife receiving her husband home and serve you, oniichan.”

“…” Decided, you say…

Like always, impulsive from head to toe, aren’t you…

“Well then. Hubby. Dinner is ready, the bath is ready and the night service is ready. From which will you start?”

“… There are many things I want to say to you, but get dressed first.”

As I spat that, Manami looked at me with upturned eyes and let out a sugary voice.

"… Mou. Hubby, you-mea-nie."

"… Shaddap."

Though my sister does and says a lot of disgusting things even under normal circumstances, due to this weird setting, the annoyingness was increased threefold.

I don't have to go along anymore with my sister's eccentricities.

And then I realized that someone who should be here wasn't.

"? Speaking of it, where has Lilith-san gone?"

If my memory serves right… We should have arranged for her to take care of the cottage along with Manami until the end of the camp.

"Aah. If it's about miss titties… I mean, the second wife, she's hiding in that shadow there, I think?"

"… Second wife?"

What kind of jokes is she spouting…

However, when I saw Lilith-san hiding in the shadow of a pillar, my doubts got blown away in an instant.

"Errrm… Lilith-san. What are you doing?"

"Hii!?"

Right when I made eye contact with her, Lilith-san put a frightened face.

What the heck… Today she's in a state where it's very difficult to find a place to look at her.

Naked apron.

It’s a naked apron.

… Thinking about it calmly, I’ll say again that seeing my sister in a naked apron before felt ridiculous.

Different from my sister’s usual state with that deeply rooted sorry character that makes you uncomfortable, Lilith-san’s naked apron figure was astounding in many senses.

W-what’s with this destructive power?

… I think that in a morals’ textbook I read at elementary school it said that when in trouble, no one better than friends to rely on.

By picturing in my brain Youhei dressed as a bunny girl, I barely managed to keep my reason.

… No, however.

Lilith-san’s voluminous chest size that fills the apron to the brim, and defenselessly exposed well-fleshed plump behind seem to hide the power to promptly blow up my reason if I get careless for just an instant.

“Ehehe. How’s it?

Hubby. Until the zombie and the rest get home, it’s your chance!

We are ready to accept any pervy command that oniichan… I mean… Hubby asks for!”

“… Kuh!”

What’s this. This feeling…

It may be because I got excited by the vision of Lilith-san’s naked apron.

It’s like when you prepare to someone the peppers they hate and the Salisbury steak they love; the novel dish of ‘meat-filled peppers’ and they can eat both of them…

If I cooled my head and thought about it, I could make some sense in an instant of the weirdness, but right now, I, seeing my sister in a naked apron, ended up thinking “this may be it”.

“Yeeeees…! The personal route is hopeless, but if we enter the harem route it may become that Manami and oniichan get joined…!

This is the last chance! Manami!

If you lead oniichan through the harem route, taking advantage of the turmoil, you can even have sex with oniichan…!”

Because of that ominous speech my sister muttered, I could come back to my senses.

“… Hah!”

Darn.

Was that my sister’s aim!?

She was about to trick me into that malignant set!

“Sob… Chiharu-sama.

Please spare me. I, so as to clean the succubi’s image… I vowed to keep my body pure…!!

If I went to engage into misconduct now, I won’t be able to look the past me in the eye…”

“If you hate it, should you be in that state…?”

“Eeeerm. That’s… You see…”

As Lilith-san kept looking for someone to help her, my sister promptly raised her voice to obstruct her.

“Miss titties. I think you’d better speak no more~”

“…!”

“Fufufufu. It’s nothing… Should Manami show oniichan ‘that’ that she has recorded on her cellphone or shouldn’t her~”

“!?”

“But, oniichan will surely receive a shock~.

By no means would miss titties with her innocent character misuse her position as a maid to do this and that to oniichan’s laundry…”

“Kyaaa

Am I thinking too much?

I think that there had been an event like this one before…

This way, thanks to an unexpected internal break up (?), I managed to avoid succumbing to my sister's allurement.

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Two hours after that.

Having reunited with the monster trio who had underwent an additional curriculum, we ate with relish the dinner prepared by Lilith-san.

Lilith-san, just as one would expect from a professional maid, is the one who cooks the best from among us.

Ever since Lilith-san freeloads at the Kusumi home, the household chores seem to have become lighter.

After eating dinner, I took a light shower to wash off my sweat and quickly went to bed.

Since then six more hours have passed.

I'm troubled. I don't feel like sleeping at all.

It has been nearly three hours since I laid in bed and closed my eyes.

Even though the time is around 2 o'clock, thinking about what to do from now on makes my chest hurt and I'm unable to sleep.

Really, what can I do…?

Having to choose just one of the charming girls around me…

Once this camp finishes, they will, from me… Request some kind of answer.

Nevertheless, still, if I forcibly dodge it, I may postpone the problem, but… Really, until when will it work?

Though somehow or other… Even if I try to postpone the answer, I have the hunch that we'll soon near the limit.

Giving up on falling asleep, I got up from bed.

When I set foot in the living room to drink water or something since my throat was dry, I noticed on the edge of my vision the figure of a girl standing at the cottage's balcony.

When I opened the sliding window, the nice and cold night breeze flowed into the living room.

"… Manami. What are you doing?"

I called out when I recognized her.

This night I can't leave Manami alone.

Somehow… That obscure thought passed through my heart.

"Nothing. Nothing really. Just looking at the stars."

"… The stars?"

When I looked up like Manami said, surely tonight, with the clear sky without a single cloud, looked like the perfect chance to gaze at the stars.

A superb view that you can't see at the city that reflexively makes you hold your breath.

"Heeeh. Even Manami does stargazing."

As I spouted my honest feelings, Manami, looking at me with scorn,

"… Oniichan. Do you think your little sister is something like a creature of unknown nature that crawled out from the depths of the hell?"

"Eh? Am I wrong?"

At least to me, my little sister… I perceive her as an inhuman being more monstrous than the monsters.

"Of course you're wrong!! Clearly Manami will be hurt if she's told such a thing!"

"… No. My bad. Of course I was joking."

I know.

As it looks like, we've been siblings for more than 10 years.

I know that my sister has an unexpected girly side.

"Oniichan. Do you plan to decide who you'll be lovers with during this camp?"

"… Mm. More or less."

"Just to make sure, is Manami not among the candidates?"

"…"

That's correct, but since I feel that that's too cruel, I made it as if I hadn't heard and kept silent.

“Is that so—? Does my first love end here—?”

SIGH

Muttered my sister guessing those feeling of mine.

It seems that, even without words, she’s able to guess my intentions.

… No.

I’d say my sister is a girl more sensitive than anyone and able to read the mood better than anyone.

“Somehow or other… Ever since Zonmi-san came to our house, I had the feeling it would be like that.

Oniichan, someday… Won’t you end up going to a place where my hands won’t reach, so it seems?”

“… Zonmi-san?”

Unexpectedly, my sister called Zonmi, whom she only called zombie, by her true name for the first time.

“… Aha. Surprised?

Is not very like Manami, and though it feels revolting, now that my love has been set as unrequited it’s come to me as having no need to regard her as a rival.

With this chance, why don’t I change for reals the way I call her?”

“Haha…!”

Let’s say that it comes to that, I think that Zonmi will be stumped.

× × ×

Thereafter.

We gazed the twinkling stars without saying a word.

It really has been a long time since I last spent such a solemn time with my sister.

I think I'll tell for a while a story from long ago.

I think you'll think of it as unexpected of what I'll tell you, but just five years ago… When Manami went to elementary school, just with looking at the faces of other people, she was a girl too afraid of strangers.

It’s a story that now would be difficult to believe, but… Putting it bluntly, Manami, for the six years of elementary school, barely attended classes.

She read too much the mood of those around her.

Speaking from the result, that was the extent of my sister’s inborn strangeness.

When communicating with others, often it’s composed of a true intention and a façade, but my sister could see through the hearts of the rest as if she read minds.

I don’t know why my sister holds that special ability.

And then, the special skill of reading too much into the mood is, to an elementary school girl less of a merit and more of a demerit.

Why is that so?

Just because she had a figure nicer than others, she was thoughtlessly approached by her male schoolmates with ulterior motives.

Just because she had better abilities than other, her female schoolmates thoughtlessly were jealous of her.

The Manami from back then… Had to endure it all with that little body of hers.

… Since when was it?

When did my sister completely lose interest in people other than me?

Nothing but me was reflected in my sister’s eyes. They didn’t reflect.

Since who knows when, my sister, by directing all of her interest and concern to me, she could master the skill of keeping her peace of mind.

Does focusing too much on others make her lonely?

Does looking away too much from others make her lonely?

Really, which way would make her happy?

… Hey, Manami.

Tell me.

If, let's say, I… Find someone dear to me and I become close to that person… What will be of your inner world?

"PANPAKAPAAN♪ Now one thing. Commemorating over ten years of unrequited love of your cute little sister, there's an important announcement to you, oniichan!"

"… Yeah?"

After a bit of silence.

As if she had thought of something, suddenly, my sister blurted out that astounding thing.

"Oniichan. I… Have decided. Manami… Will become a monster tamer."

"…… Really?"

"Really really. Totally really♪

To tell the truth, I've been thinking about many things since we went to the Netherworld, but I think that this is the best way to be besides oniichan—.

If I can't be by your side as a lover… From now on, Manami will be by oniichan's side as your rival!"

"…"

I see.

Certainly, like that she can increase the time she's with me even without entering into a love relationship.

Like always, a wild idea very much like my sister.

"But… Monster tamer, you say, that… I think it's not in the line of going to *Hello World* searching for a job."

I only have a faint recollection about that, but I think you need to have your special talent recognized by the International Monster Association and bestowed a Contract Ring.

"Tsk, tsk, tsk. How naïve, oniichan~. Now look at this!"

"!?"

What my sister produced saying that was, with the same design as the one I'm wearing… A silver glittery Contract Ring.

"Manami!? You… From where the heck!?"

"It's easy♪ This, y'know, I got it normally when I consulted it with Kana-tan?"

"… Wha?"

"In fact, it seems that it's quite the valuable thing, but making use of Kana-tan's connections, It seems that it was unexpectedly easy to get a hold of it♥"

"…"

Mom.

You… No matter how much you dote on your daughter, please don't abuse your authority!?

“? Now that you mention it, I haven’t seen mom ever since we got to the camp, but… Manami. Do you know something?”

When I asked, Manami, shaking her head,

“Manami too doesn’t know, how’d I put it… Even Manami doesn’t know but 20% of what Kana-tan’s thinking about~.

But… This, I can tell you. Mom is hiding something from us.

Something she absolutely can’t tell us… Something very important—”

“? What the heck is it?”

“Well. Manami doesn’t know that much.”

Saying that with a face as if nothing had happened, Manami stretched with a grandiose “mmmm” and commented.

“Well, then, oniichan. It’s already late at night and Manami the good middle schooler girl kid has to go to sleep. Good night~”

“… Good night.”

Manami parted from my side in haste with quick feet.

Nevertheless.

At that time I caught a glimpse of my sister’s profile illuminated by the rooms lights.

My sister’s eyes, though I hadn’t noticed it until just now, were abnormally… Red and swollen by tears.

“…”

Sorry.

Sorry, Manami.

My sister’s world of thoroughly looking away from others; where she and me could be alone together that until now sustained her self… Had been completely smashed today.

However.

Even knowing that, still, the day I answer my sister’s hopes won’t ever come.

… But, y’know, Manami.

This I can tell you with confidence.

Just if.

If we weren’t brother and sister… Just a man and a woman living together in this world… I’d undoubtedly would had loved you as a woman without fail.

… Why is it?

Because I love you.

No matter what outrageous things we experience… I will always… Think of you as my cute little sister, the apple of my eyes.

A girl who, no matter how many times she was rejected, bravely whispered sweet nothings and devotedly serves you… Who would hate her?

…

……

While seeing off my sister’s back, who was clearly just fruitlessly pretending to be tough, I held such unspeakable feelings.

× × ×

At the same time.

The something Kusumi Manami had predicted Kanae was hiding.

That something, slowly, slowly, started moving.

However, Chiharu and his gang had no way to know that it had certainly started moving.

× × ×

This is the continent where the undead tribe lives, Living Lodge.

In it, there’s a midwinter land of perennial ices where not even a single monster lives.

The monster tamer that had tasted defeat in his showdown with Chiharu.

Lance Patriot was waiting in silence for his last moments inside an ice prison built by a dreadful power.

Cold.

It’s incredibly cold.

Inside the cell, there were sorry number of blankets prepared and a small quantity of embers not enough to sustain one’s live.

It’s seems that these undead bastards think that I won’t be so easily killed.

Are they waiting until I get my life slowly drained inside this cell?

It can’t be said that they are very courteous with people, such a revolting bunch, cursed Lance.

(… Well, since it's come to this, it’s not worth worrying about.)

Even if the cell had been reinforced with a special magic, Lance, who was once given the nickname of Tamer of Souls, held skill that gave despair to numerous monster tamers.

That in mind, there's still the possibility of a jailbreak left, but… Surely now it doesn't seem feasible.

(… Ahaha. There's no need to be disheartened. Isn't being defeated in battle a suitable fate for a rogue?)

When, his conscience growing dim, Lance let out a self-mocking smile.

"… 'd grief. Such a troublesome undisciplined kouhai I have."

Out of nowhere, a man's voice was heard.

"Wha. You… How… !?"

Am I dreaming?

Who suddenly appeared before Lance was his superior monster tamer appointed by the Black Tamers.

The person called Clarie Shernfelt.

"Let's leave the chit-chat for later. For now let's scape."

"… Useless. This prison is not something where a regular monster tamer can make it."

"Ah, so. If… It's not a regular monster tamer, they can make it?"

Right when the voice of a young girl was heard, the icicles surrounding Lance were reduced to dust.

"… Noelle!? Could it be that even you!?"

Noelle, both arms turned into those of a golem, spewed abusive language with sullen discontent.

"… Han! Could you not misunderstand? It's not like I would care if you froze to death here, but… We are childhood friends brought up in the same institution."

"… Why the heck are you lot here? Could it be… Under boss's commands!?"

Receiving Lance's question, Clarie, promptly shaking his head,

"Nope. Regrettably it is not that.

Boss, right now… Is supervising the final adjustments of the Arcadia plan and doesn't have spare resources left for any other things.

So, this… Is just a whim of mine?

Will you fight with us, Lance Patriot?

Your necromancer power is needed for the realization of our boss's plans!"

"…"

Lance was left mute by the outrageous reply that Clarie gave.

"… Clarie-san. Sorry for wasting your goodwill, but I don't plan on leaving from here."

"… An? Why the heck?"

"To put it simply, I'm afraid of fighting again.

Kusumi Chiharu.

… Fighting that guy was bad news to a nasty degree.

No~. He's out of this world.

That guy is the ultimate strong person with victory granted to him since birth.

Clarie-san.

I'm… Genuinely frightened. If I were to taste that fear once more… It would honestly be better if I died inside this cell!"

"…"

It's not just the simple loss of body heat.

Kusumi Chiharu. Remembering my battle with him, my body trembles with fear.

As if I shouldn't had fought with him.

I sincerely don't remember what happened after we released our limiters.

… But, the fresh memory of his own defeat brought up by Chiharu's overwhelming power was deeply engraved in Lance's mind.

"Being afraid… It's the same for me!

Frankly, right now my limbs are trembling. But, y'know, if we flew away now, who will support boss?"

Saying that, Clarie handed Lance a cane with a magic power stone embedded.

"It's fine. You can do it!

Show it… To the world! Our power! This… Is the last battle!"

"…"

What the heck is this guy saying?

If we speak of battle power, the man before him didn't hold a candle to Lance.

However, maybe it was because of that.

The man before him has experienced a number of defeats beyond imagination, and maybe because of that he doesn't fear in the slightest losing.

(In the end… Even losers have their losers' pride. Something like that? It's not like I have such a hobby, though…)

Without a word, Lance took the magic power stone-embedded cane that Clarie had handed him.

(As if I had taken out a fish bone that was struck inside my throat… A wonderful and refreshing feeling.)

Lance, smiling, took out the dragon bone powder he had hidden inside the depths of his breast pocket for if the worst case came, scattered it around him, lifted the cane in his hand and bestowed to it transient souls.

RUMBLE RUMBLE

Then, while raising a sound as if the ground trembled, appeared the shapes of uncountable Skull dragons.

“W-what’s this!?”

Seeing those grotesque existences suddenly appear before their eyes, the ghoul gaolers fell into a state of panic.

Because of the large number of summoned Skull dragons, the ice prison followed the way of destruction.

“We are the Black Tamers, able to make crying children to stop! We’ll show you! Us, we have our own justice!”

With the crumbling building at his back, Clarie proclaimed in a loud voice.

“… It’s because they say these lines seriously is why I can’t come to like ourthe Black Tamer’s men—. As if taken from an old hot-blooded student drama. It’s cold in many ways.”

And, before the series of events that happened before her eyes, Noelle stated that awfully cold-hearted thought.

Giant tribe: Ogre

LV: 6

Physical strength: C
Power: B
Speed: C

Netherworld demon monster.

Even though its body is huge, it's surprisingly timid.

Kind-hearted and bad with quarrels.

Serial number: 032

Chapter 3 - Miss Monster girl contest

Thereafter.

Having totally finished all of the curriculum of the monster tamer training camp, we, with nothing else to do, engaged in inconsequential things like playing with the UNO that Kyouko had brought while we waited for the last day of the camp, when the MVP would be decided, to come.

Even so, UNO…

Quite the nostalgic item she has brought.

Calm down, calm down. When going on field trips there was always at least one person in the class who was the type to bring it.

I have the feeling that Kyouko is one of those.

“My turn. A direct attack to Kyouko with five draw two in a row!”

“W-wait, Haru! Aren’t you being mean to me since a while ago!? You are only aiming your attacks at me!”

“Mm. Really? That’s not my intention, though.”

“… Is that so?”

Inquired Kyouko with reproachful eyes.

“Obviously! First, this is a game. Don’t get so heated up. Generally, haven’t you been a bit too self-conscious since long ago… Ack!”

“… Haru, could you perhaps be a do-M? Do you wish so much to be kicked by me?”

“Moron. ‘S not. Like that.”

“…”

The reason why I’m provoking Kyouko is just one.

The short skirt-wearing Kyouko naturally has to raise her leg to kick me.

If I use the kinetic vision of the me who has awakened the power of the maou… Even if it's just for a little instant, I can perfectly see with these eyes a glimpse of Kyouko's panties.

Fufufu.

To lose a fly to catch a trout.

To be caught by such a basic technique while being my childhood friend, quite the simple fellow.

Among them, just one person.

Only my sister Manami noticed my true intentions, but she made it to show me by herself glimpses of the contents of her skirt…

Since seeing my sister's panties of course doesn't make me happy, I'll keep ignoring her.

With this and that… It happened when I was fully enjoying the camp with the girls.

Had I known that they'd hold the 'Miss monster girl' event on the last day of the camp…

× × ×

"What I want to say is as I told you before. Since, currently, the ranking of the girls of the camp seems to be all first position with the same grades, if we go like this it may become the historical first occasion of three people being awarded the MVP at the same time~.

In my opinion, though everyone being first is a foul and I wouldn't allow anyone to go out with my son, since I think that that's not fair, hence if you participate in this contest I invite you to, I'll allow it!"

"…"

The heck, when it comes to mom… Just when I think she's shown up abruptly, she comes with this outrageous talk.

Summarizing mom's talk.

Since, currently, Zonmi, Kyouko and Iris are tied together in first place with the exact same points, it seems there's a possibility that like this the "who will become my lover?" won't get settled at the end of the camp.

So this is why this suspicious miss monster girl contest that mom suggested.

The monsters confess various things to the monster tamers they are grateful to and the spectators who act as judges rate the depth of their mutual trust… That seems to be the gist of it.

As this event is purely recreational and not tied to the main training, usually it has no effects on the camp grades.

Exceptionally, the monster selected as 'miss monster' this year will have their grade subtly increased.

In other words… If one among the girls became the victor, inevitably the line of the same points first place MVP will vanish.

"Mother. Let me participate in this event without fail!"

Her usual cool beauty atmosphere seems like a lie.

As if a fire was burning in her eyes, Zonmi entered hot-blooded mode.

The other two girls, same like Zonmi, looked unusually fired up.

Hmmmm. Well, then, so it's come to that?

As there's a high chance that they'll outwit the other rivals in this event, it's not like the fighting spirit is not needed.

"Hey, hey. Kana-tan. By the way, can Manami also join that event? Manami is human, though!"

“Mmm. As expected, for this time only, do I have to be an itty-bitty strict? Mana-tan, house-sit like an adult.”

“Eeeh. I don’t wanna house-sit by myself. At least Kana-tan has to remain at the cottage with me! I’m tired of looking at miss titties’ titties!"

“Manami-sama. Could you please not say such mean things so nonchalantly?”

“Ahaha. Sorry, sorry. Mom has to now go meet an old acquaintance for work-related issues. Good grief… Even though this was a chance for my long awaited mother-daughter alone time, how disagreeable—”

Mom laughed out loud with her usual easygoing attitude.

However, why is it.

It may be because of all those long years as mother and child that I noticed.

Mom’s smile seemed just a bit somewhat forced.

Speaking of which, Manami had told me previously… That mom was hiding something from us.

I think that I at last understand those words.

However, naturally, it’s not like I can ask mom “what are you hiding?” based on such an intuitive hunch.

Only a murky feeling that I can’t vent out remains in my chest.

× × ×

Finally the last day of the camp arrived.

“… Nephilim. And red dragon too. Finally the time has come for the decision dragged out for so long to be made.”

“Fufufufu. The one who will be laughing last will be me, the childhood friend… I’ll show you how I’ll definitely make Haru mine!”

“… Who will take the seat of the monster tamer’s wife? This endless battle… Will be decided at last?”

We are, currently, at the venue of the miss monster girl contest.

We were standing backstage.

“Eeeh. Then, entry number one! Newbie monster tamer Hongou Taichi-san and false slime Michelle-chan. You two, take the stage!”

“…”

Aah. That’s right.

By the way, the one who’s acting as the host of this event is the mid-rank monster tamer who worked as my coach during the intensive training from before—Asakura Yuina-san.

Yuina-san although she was sending to us who were waiting backstage glances filled with animosity from time to time, skillfully kept acting as a host.

By the way, that we ended up in the position of last performer in the order

Zonmi

Iris

Kyouko (last)

is it really just by chance?

That Yuina-san holds a grudge against us for shaming her has been clearly conveyed, but… I don’t feel that that has any relation.

“Eeeh. The act that, as you see, the fake slime Michelle-chan can’t take human shape it’s because it seems that its little magic power is insufficient, but, for that, the affection for its master is especially strong. Isn’t it, Michelle-chan?”

“… Guchuguchu. Guchuguchu.”

“…”

What the heck.

Though it has been conveyed that it frantically wanted to convey something, since in the first place it can’t speak human language, it doesn’t look like communication can be established…

Looking at Michelle-chan’s grotesque shape, like a molten corpse of a living being, I really felt seriously that “could it be that my environment as a monster tamer is very blessed?”

Was it thanks to Yuina-san’s good hosting, having quickly gotten the knack?

After that, the miss monster girl contest proceeded all right.

However, while it’s right that the contents were ‘monsters expressing their thankful feelings to the partners they are usually indebted to’, there was never the atmosphere of a monster confessing its love to a human.

As I thought, is it that a human and a monster becoming lovers is made taboo by society’s common sense?

Such a thing… Makes me extremely worried.

“Eeeh. Now, what everyone was waiting for! Entry number 16.

Newbie monster tamer Kusumi Chiharu-san and the lovely pretty girl from the ghoul clan!

It’s Zonmi Ra McKenzie’s entry!

The couple who has caught the attention and become the talk of this camp, what kind of performance will they show us!? Everybody, anticipate it!”

“…!”

We’ve been had.

Even though I vaguely had a hunch, she’s nonchalantly raised the hurdle.

As instructed by Yuina-san, we stood in the middle of the stage.

“Uwaah…”

I reflexively leaked out a voice of admiration.

Before us, monster tamers and their partners… Both of them together accounted for nearly three hundred spectators sitting there and watching our every action.

“…”

Contrasting with me, who was stiff from the nervousness due to being unaccustomed to standing in public, Zonmi kept a cool countenance.

As expected, the word cool beauty, wrong… Ghoul beauty fits Zonmi to a T.

Like that, Zonmi took the mike prepared onstage and, without batting so much an eyelash, spouted shocking words.

“As I’ve been introduced, I am Zonmi Ra McKenzie.

… Well, going straight to the point, I hold romantic feelings for this man here called Kusumi Chiharu.

The trust as a monster tamer’s partner… Not in that sense, I love him as a man.”

“““““!?”””””

The instant after Zonmi voiced such shocking words.

I felt as if the flow of mood that had been drifting until then at the venue instantly changed.

“And it seems that the other two girls who will be coming later onstage hold the same feelings as me.

As I don’t like being roundabout, I’ll tell it clearly now; the monster who wins this contest from among the 3, me included, is arranged to marry our partner Chiharu.”

“““““ ”””””
...

The people at the venue couldn’t hide their bewilderment because of Zonmi’s bombshell announcement that she had fired as if expecting an answer.

Well, to be fair, if we say that disclosing the news with the attitude of facing a duel is much like the overly serious Zonmi, it was Zonmi-like?

“Eeh!? That ghoul girl… Is she serious!?”

“I can’t believe it. For starters, such a thing as a human and a monster in a relationship… I’ve never heard of it!”

“Though, personally, it’s not like I want to act in such an emotion-garnering way… I’m already at a relationship level with Chiharu-kun of being both stark naked under the same blankets heating each other’s bodies… That’s why I absolutely can’t afford to lose this showdown.”

“““““!?”””””

“Having shown once my naked body to a man is the same as if my body had been already sullied.

If I can’t make Chiharu take responsibility at any cost, I, in the future… I’ll possibly end up stranded on the roadside without being able to find any one to take me.”

“…”

Zonmi kept pleading to the spectators with a tone filled with emotion.

I see.

This Zonmi chick… I don’t know if it's intentionally or by chance, she’s been saying clever things.

That said, appealing to the feelings of the audience is better in garnering votes than saying outright “vote for me”.

Nevertheless.

“That girlie… She’s heavy.. No matter how pretty she is, that’s a bit…”

“Calm down[check]. They’ve only slept together once, pretentious woman!”

“That’s right! Gross”

Contrary to my expectations, Zonmi's strategy seemed to be extremely unpopular with the judges of the venue.

The love philosophy (?) that Zonmi has which was, to put it nicely, modest, and to put it badly, old-fashioned, wasn't understood by the children of modern times who were at the venue.

"… This means, since we already have parental consent, that the only thing left now are Chiharu's feelings! Everyone at the venue! Could you please vote righteously for my and Chiharu's cheerful family!?"

"…"

Without noticing the completely chilled atmosphere of the venue, Zonmi kept pleading.

Erm, the people at the venue have been taken aback in quite a diligent way.

"… Z-Zonmi-san.

For your 30 minutes long explanation of your future plans… Thank you very much.

Who will be taking the stage next is Iris Scarlet Linwurm-chan the red dragon~. Everyone, let's give her a warm applause~"

In second place, it's Iris.

Prompted by Yuina-san the people at the venue gave some applauses, but once they saw Iris, the claps stopped and they directed chilly glares to me.

"Hey. Such a little kid is also a bride candidate? This Kusumi Chiharu guy…"

“No matter how you look at it he’s a lolicon… Even if just the monster fetish was already quite **that**, on top of it, a lolicon… Really the worst…”

The words I hear from the venue are quite severe.

“…”

Perhaps because, totally different from the time with Zonmi, she was not used to appearing before a crowd of people, nervousness could be picked up from Iris’s gait.

“… That, erm… I…”

The moment Iris started to say something.

KIIIIIIIIIIIIIIN!

Perhaps because the mike wasn’t adjusted, it produced a grating noise that could be said to be a kind of a staple at these sort of events.

“Fue…”

From Iris, who was exposed to public attention, none of her usual high-handed attitude could be felt.

The one who’s now before me, suited to her age… If we put aside the fact that she’s from the red dragon clan, was just your run-of-the-mill 12 year old girl.

“… Hey. That kid, isn’t she cute?”

“… Yeah. I may have said that before, but I think that I’ve understood a bit that Kusumi Chiharu guy’s feelings.”

Is this what they call a lucky break?

Iris's loveable blunder seemed to have touched the attendance's heartstrings.

In all honesty.

The glares the attendance has been sending to us until now were relentless, but seeing Iris's pure acts, they slowly started sending her "fight on!" cheers.

"Fuu…"

Iris, taking one big, deep breath, seems to have succeeded in recovering her usual mood.

"Monster tamer. I must apologize to thee for one thing."

"Mm. Why so sudden?"

Iris wants to apologize to me?

After all, as she was born into the elites called red dragons, Iris is the top (number one) most prideful person I know.

I think it's rare for Iris to apologize to me.

"The pledge of marriage I agreed with thee… For now I want to retract it."

"… Eh?"

The words that Iris spouted, as if contrary to all of her insistence until now… Were too astounding.

"… Why the heck?"

As I asked the reason, Iris, slowly shaking her head,

"This… Is something I've been pondering for a while.

Unfortunately, I don't meet the requirements to be betrothed to thee… Nowadays, suddenly I came to think like that."

"… Do you mean that age-wise you can't get married?"

Has she learned about the fact that to get married in the human world she needs to be 16 or more?

When I voiced what I thought, Iris just grinned broadly.

"… Missing the mark but surprisingly striking the essence… It's truly like thee to say that.

However, unfortunately, thy expectations are amiss.

I… Since I lost both my parents at a tender age, I led a life of being shut alone inside my shell, knowing nothing about the outside world.

For that very reason… Compared to the feelings the ghoul or the Nephilim hold for thee I ended up not being confident enough of my own feelings.

Right now, these feelings I profess thee, like those of a just-born fledgling who takes the first being they see as their parent… Can someone deny that they are that kind of blind devotion?"

"…"

I didn't know.

Really, was Iris hiding these kind of feelings in her heart…

Yet, I think I understand what Iris is saying.

About Iris's marriage proposal, 'she's ignorant of the ways of the world, therefore I rushed out'… I had that kind of recognition.

"Moreover… As right now my experience is insufficient in regards to many things, I cannot possibly act as thy support.

Ever since meeting y'all… And coming to live together… I keenly realized that. For that, I, for the moment, if the strife dies out I shall return to the Netherworld and try to attend school."

"… S-school!?"

Right now at this moment, surely I'm not the only one who could picture Iris dressed in an sparkling uniform and holding a schoolbag.

"… It's not that surprising of a thing.

Rather, I find myself more questionable that such a thing hadn't come to my mind until now. If I go to school, I shall part from thee for a minimum of 3 years…

However, just if…"

Instantly, Iris, who was casting her eyes down with a weak voice, with a face of having made some sort of decision, firmly raising her head,

"Just if… Yet notwithstanding, these feelings of mine were unchanged… I want thee to listen to my confession. Although… For the one confessing to say "I want thee to wait" may be really foolish…"

"… I'll wait."

"… Nu?"

"Iris. The one who should apologize would rather be me.

I… Till I heard your words, I was regarding your 'marry me' speech half as a joke.

… But, in fact it's different.

I'm glad that you've thought so hard about it.

That's why I'll stop being half-baked.

3 years…?

Once they pass… If your feelings don't change, I'll definitely put off my answer like I'm doing now.

I'm resolved to take your feelings on wholeheartedly!"

As I voiced my honest feelings, Iris let out a daring smile,

"… Fu! Is it so?

However… This very minute, I'm convinced.

This feelings I hold for thee, shan't fade never ever, in all eternity.

I love thee, Kusumi Chiharu.

I like thee more than any other person in the world."

"…"

After declaring that with an extraordinary smile, Iris quickly left the venue.

I give up… After a while, my heartthrobs don't give (show) any signs of calming down.

… That and all, wasn't that the first time that Iris called me by name?

And Iris's straight feelings that I felt seem to have reached the spectators.

"W-what a praiseworthy kid."

"… Strange. I don't know why but… I want to root for that child."

Different from the time with Zonmi, Iris's brave request had reached the hearts of the people at the venue.

“Iris-chan, thank you very much—.

Now, bringing an end to this miss monster girl contest, the Nephilim Kurose Kyouko-chan. Everyone, let’s give a grand applause suitable to the last entry!”

“…!”

In third place, Kyouko.

Standing on the stage, Kyouko’s nervousness doesn’t lost to the one from Iris earlier.

By the way.

It has been bugging me since before.

I… Don’t understand very well Kyouko’s reason for joining this event.

I mean, really?

Kyouko, from among the three girls I have a contract with, is the only one who hasn’t told “I like you” to me and her marriage proposal was made on the nonsensical grounds of “it’s unbalanced”.

“Was it necessary for you to enter this by force?”

When I voiced my heartfelt thoughts, Kyouko made a sullen face and raised her eyebrows.

“W-why!?”

“I mean, you… Isn't it that you don’t like me in a romantic way?

Being that the case… What need did you have to join a showdown where they betted who's marrying me?”

“…”

Hearing my words, Kyouko dropped her glance looking downcast.

… Have I been a bit too harsh?

However, there's no helping that.

If she married a partner that she doesn't love, Kyouko would only become unhappy.

As for me, for Kyouko… I want her to find someone she truly loves and become happy.

Kyouko, after a bit of silence,

Of course I love you, moron!

For some reason, Kyouko shouted an astounding statement in anger when I should've been the angry one.

"You… Cut it out! Stop being so thick headed!"

"… Eh? Wait!? Could it be that Kyouko loves me!?"

"That's… That's what I've been telling you for a while, you moron!"

"Since when!? Since when the heck do you like me, Kyouko!?"

Since the childhood friend I've known for years has dropped that bombshell, I unconsciously also became panicked.

"Of course since the start, moron!"

"…"

Hey.

Someone explain it to me.

What the heck, I'm being confessed or I'm being told up… Which is it?

"Haru, you moron!

Moron, moron, moron!

Even though for over 7 years I've aaaaaaaaaaaaaalways felt like that… Haru, all the time… You flirt with other girls before my eyes…"

"Woah!? My bad! Don't cry!"

Suddenly, Kyouko broke into tears right there.

“Uwaah. That guy… The worst.”

“I can’t find a bit of anything to sympathize.”

“…”

The booing I heard from the venue were painful.

“Eeeerm. Hey. Could you stand? Kyouko?”

There’s no reason to keep being on the stage any more.

I, to pull up Kyouko, who had broken into tears, I grabbed her from her clothes’ sleeve, and then it happened.

“!?”

Kyouko’s bewitching lips plugged up my own lips.

“… Kyouko?”

“…”

While unconsciously sliding a finger through my lips, I stood stock still dumbfounded.

On my mouth that had been touched by Kyouko lingered traces of a faint warmth.

“D-don’t misunderstand!”

Same as usual, Kyouko—with a way of speaking like taken from the template of a tsundere character, stated that to me.

“I’ve already said it, but… That the other girls have done it and only I haven’t is unfair or because it’s unbalanced… It’s not like that…”

After that introduction, Kyouko,

“The kiss from just now comes from my piled up feelings of seven years… Gratefully accept it… Moron!”

Stating that clearly, she left the stage.

“…”

I ended up being left alone on the venue.

I didn’t know.

Unexpectedly, that Kyouko has always… Liked me.

Thinking about it carefully, though this event, I… From all three girls, Zonmi, Iris and Kyouko, have received confessions and ended up with the shocking experience of having kissed all of them.

Kyouko, who until now put herself aside in romantic matters, by confessing to me… Is now standing on an equal line as everyone?

Next, the only thing left is waiting for the results of who’s been chosen as the MVP of this camp.

“What the… Ein…”

It was when I was thinking those things.

The scene unfolded before my eyes of the sky being painted up in black as if hinting the end of the world—.

The sun's light blocked by something darkish, as far as I could see, all light was lost as if it had become night.

That which suddenly appeared at the human world—

Was the beginning of the end.

× × ×

Turning back the time to twenty minutes before the end of the miss monster girl contest.

Near the Abyss Gate in Fuji's Sea of Trees — aka Hell's Red, two monster tamers were facing each other.

The first tamer was Luka the Snake Charmer.

She, who was the youngest in history to be promoted to top rank monster tamer, had the hopes of many who called her a 'genius of once in 10 years' put on her, but… As if she had lost her way somewhere, her other identity was that of the top of the evil organization of the Black Tamers.

"Ufufu. My, my. The last boss's entry… Should I call it like that~?

Truth is… I though there were too many few people protecting the largest Abyss Gate of the world.

Immortal Tamer—Kusumi Kanae."

"…"

The name of the other monster tamer was Kusumi Kanae.

She, who's widely regarded as the strongest both in name and in fact from all the current top rank monster tamers, has enough skill to be called a 'living legend' by her peers.

"… Oh, my, Haruka.

Have you forgotten how to use respectful speech in the while I haven't seen you?

Long ago, you were a child who'd respectfully call me 'senpai! senpai!'. Good grief… Something I don't want the time to change."

Luka, dropping her glance a bit,

"Haruka… Is it? That way of addressing me… No one but you use it anymore, Kane-san."

She directed Kanae a piercing glare like a snake aiming for its prey.

"Then… What would you be doing here?

According to my research, shouldn't you have been entrusted with guarding your son?"

"No~. Certainly I was told something like that by that gramps maou from the IMA, y'know~.

Sorry, but just waiting doesn't sit with me.

If I stop your rampage, I'll be killing two birds with one stone by protecting my dear Haru-nyan and protecting world peace.

So, hey?

I-it's not like I'm skipping work, y'know?"

Hearing Kanae's claim, Luka deeply sighed.

"Haah~. Really a, befitting of you… Irresponsible reply.

Besides… There's a line I can't overlook.

Stopping me to save the world, you say? That you make me to be something like an evildoer taking revenge on mankind… How vexing."

"… Oh, my. If that's not the case then what are you doing here?

Don't tell me that by chance when you were taking a walk… You passed by this globally important location?"

Before Kanae's questioning, Luka slowly shook her head.

"Not at all. It's by chance.

By chance, when I was taking a walk, I turned up to rebuild the world.

So, Kanae-san. Please make way.

At the other side of that gate there are monsters of the anti-human faction numbering over a million lying in wait.

They are eagerly awaiting the day I destroy this Abyss Gate."

Confronted with Luka's speech, Kanae raised her eyebrows.

"… You.

Do you really understand what you are saying yourself?

Hell's Red is the largest Abyss Gate in the world where thousands of monsters can cross to the human world at once. If the barrier were to be momentarily disrupted, won't the balance of the world crumble in an instant!?"

"…"

Luka, after a moment of silence.

"Of course I'm taking that into account.

If we liken it to games, this gate is just like the world's reset button.

To properly remake this wrong world… I'll push the world's reset button. If I weren't allowed to do that… I'll could only adopt the wrong methods to straighten this wrong world.

Kanae-san.

I thought that if it were you, who opposed alongside me the research from ten years ago, you'll understand that."

"… I don't understand and I don't want to.

But, Haruka.

That you mistook your way is my responsibility as your former superior.

Tha's why… I came here.

I won't allow it. I definitely stop your rampage here!

Summon—Phoenix."

What Haruka summoned with a speed that couldn't be picked up was her beloved partner the Immortal bird—Phoenix.

The flame-covered three meters long bird spirit sprayed scorching flames against Luka.

"… The legend class from the bird beast tribe. Phoenix, is it? The monster that you employ hasn't changed from ten years ago."

Luka sighed, talking to no one.

"Summon—Basilisk."

She summoned the huge snake with a body that spans one kilometer—Basilisk.

Basilisk shut down the fierce attacks from the immortal bird that rained down by coiling around Luka.

“Summon—Bahamut.”

Next, the one Kanae summoned was a five meters long… Sapphire blue scaled flying dragon.

Legend class.

The three monsters summoned here right now were monsters appropriately crowned with the reputation of the strongest, to whom only a handful even from among the top class monster tamers had made pacts with.

Legend class were monsters close to gods of which only one could exist in the world, and currently there was just one of them for each of the twelve monster tribes.

Legend class monsters boasted the battle prowess of the strongest class from among the monsters of all twelve tribes, and word was sent that they were the monsters that started each of the tribes.

“Haruka. Let’s stop with the formalities. From here on it will be a clash of power against power. Baah-kun. Have at it!”

“… Kuh! The only monster that Kusumi Kanae could summon should have been just the immortal bird…! Unnoticed, with such a powerful monster, she…!”

The highly calorific ray of light that Bahamut shot from its mouth seemed to be effective against Basilisk’s solid scales.

“… Ufufu. A reckless person, like always~. Commanding two legend class at the same time is an irresponsibility.”

However, in spite of the overwhelming handicap, Luka’s smile didn’t fade.

It was definitely not a bluff.

To Luka, even against two legend class, that she would be able to achieve victory was a given.

“Two… is it? But I never said a word about the legend classes I'm contracted to being just two.”

“…!?”

“Haruka. I’ll tell you something good that you can take to the afterlife.

My contracted legend classes are six.

Half of the legend classes in the world are already my friends!”

“… Six!? What nonsense is…!?”

“If you don’t believe it, what about confirming it with your own eyes? It’s not like we have let the years pass pointlessly.”

Kanae, approaching the ring with her mouth with a composed smile,

“Summon—“

She next summoned her third legend class.

× × ×

“… I beg your pardon, milady.”

That… Was too one-sided to be called a fight.

The six legend class monsters that Kanae indulgently summoned kept pouring attacks with a power that would exterminated any normal monster in one hit onto Luka's summoned Basilisk.

Basilisk, receiving on its body the simultaneous attacks from six legend classes, unable to keep monster form, undid its transformation in less than two minutes.

The untransformed Basilisk became an aged man in a butler suit and kneeled down on the ground.

"… It looks like your trump card has depleted all of your magic power, but… What about meekly surrendering? If you surrender now, I may lessen your spanking from a thousand smacks to nine hundred smacks."

"… Yeah. I lost. It surely is utter defeat.

What's truly astounding is not the power of the legend class… But your magic power quantity that, even while supplying magic power to six legend class monsters at once, lets you crack jokes.

Just about everything is absurd.

… I wish you didn't carry power inflation to extremes."

With that preface, Luka,

"So… I concede victory to you in the duel as monster tamers, Kanae-san."

She showed a bewitching smile.

"!?"

Next instant, Kanae witnessed firsthand an astounding scene that didn't look to be from this world.

To Kanae, who didn't know under what principle it worked, it was something utterly incomprehensible.

Luka, after taking in the Basilisk's body inside her own, in the blink of an eye had her body turned into that of a monster—.

She changed into the form that would be later spoken of as 'ultimate perfect form Great Luka-san'.

Dragon tribe: Bahamut LV: 39

Physical strength: A
Power: S
Speed: S

Legendary dragon monster.

The beams it emits destroy everything.

Mighty power in a small body.

Serial number: ???

Chapter 4 - Prelude to destruction

That was a desperate scene certainly suitable to be described as the end of the world.

… The sky was black. Pitch black.

Looking really closely, one could notice that the true identity of the thing that blackened the sky was that of a crowd of flying-type monsters.

Are you… Joking…?

That number, rounding it down, was no less than ten thousands.

Seeing that many monsters at once in the human world… It was an unheard-of scene.

Before this unprecedented happening that suddenly took place, the people at the venue of the miss monster girl contest instantly fell into panic.

“Eeeeeeerm. Everyone. Calm down. Cam down, please.”

The one who got the ball rolling in order to calm down this situation was the mid-rank monster tamer Yuina-san.

“According to the info that we have just received, the first barrier of the sky Abyss Gate—Eternal White has been destroyed by an attack of the Black Tamers.

Due to this damage, an estimate of fifty thousands monsters from the anti-human faction have invaded the human world… Their objective are the people who possess magic power… In other words, us. Luckily, in this occasion no ordinary person will suffer any harm.”

“!?”

An attack to the Abyss Gate by the Black Tamers…?

About the Abyss Gates, I’ve heard that they are located either in the sky, in the sea or on land.

When we went to the Netherworld before, we made use of a marine Abyss Gate… The one attacked this time was a sky Abyss Gate.

So that's why this many flying-type monsters have appeared?

"We had been withholding this info from all of the rookies, but… To tell the truth, intelligence of an attack to the Abyss Gates by the Black Tamers had been leaked to the Association some time ago.

So… That all of you rookies have been gathered here at the camp is not unrelated. We have no time and… On top of that, we also have no hands.

That's why we'd want all of you fight alongside us.

The one located at the Fuji's Sea of Trees is literally the world's largest Abyss Gate—Hell's Red.

The damage if they break through here cannot be compared to what's happening over our heads.

"… No joke."

"How do you want us to fight such a horde of monsters!?"

Hearing Yuina-san's words, the rookies at the venue couldn't stop trembling.

"… Of course we don't plan on asking something unreasonable of you rookies. We are, so to speak, no more than insurance.

Hell's Red is a location of utmost importance for humanity.

Currently, the one entrusted with the protection of Hell's Red… Is the legendary monster tamer—Kusumi Kanae!"

"!?"

Right after they heard mom's name.

The air of tension that filled the venue relaxed.

"By Kusumi Kanae… You mean the Immortal Tamer?"

"The one who's told to be the strongest from among all the generations of top class monster tamers, and to have by herself the battle prowess of 2,000 regular tamers…?"

"Rookies. Be calm.

Seeing that Kanae-san is entrusted with its protection, that Hell's Red would get destroyed and the peace of humanity put in jeopardy is very unlikely.

However, even Kanae-san is human.

It may be possible that a surprise attack by traitors lets them break the first barrier.

Come that time, it’s our turn.

So that no harm will reach the populace, why don’t we give our all to stop the monster invasion here!?"

“… What the first barrier stops aren’t just… Monsters categorized as E rank type?”

“… Yeah. If it’s like that, even we may be able to stop them.”

“…”

Receiving Yuina-san’s plead, the people at the venue gradually looked like they were recovering their eagerness.

Really, mom’s great.

The panic of moments ago looked like a lie… The moment mom’s name came out, the mood at the venue changed entirely.

However, contrasting with the people around me who had recovered their calm, my face didn’t clear up.

I, who through the survival race passed down at the land of ghouls called the hundred death’s course… Became able to feel the magic power flow of my surroundings, could notice it.

In a place not so far from here.

At the other end through this forest.

In a point around ten kilometers apart southwest.

I noticed it.

Since a while ago, there—two magic power clumps that released a presence unlike anything I had felt till now are engaged in fierce battle.

My body keeps sweating from the discomfort.

Perhaps… It may be that the people who are battling there are stronger than the current me with my limiter 100% released.

This is a first.

Even if I go at full strength, I can't picture me winning.

"… Chiharu. What's the matter?"

It may be since I was lost in thought with a grim face.

Zonmi, who was around, peeked at my face of unrest.

Assuming that the info we heard from Yuina-san is true, from the two people that currently are out on battle at Fuji's Sea of Trees, one is undoubtedly mom.

In that case, the other one…?

Did the Black Tamers have a monster tamer able to fight on par with mom?

…

……

Regrettably… Just one.

I happened to know a monster tamer with a true power equal to mom.

That person… The first tamer I ever met… My former teacher who taught me the ropes of being a monster tamer.

"Hey, Zonmi, Kyouko, Iris. Could you follow me to a place without saying a word?"

"… Nu?"

"What now, that of a sudden?"

"… There's a person I have to meet no matter what.

Who does that person think they are to do this? On top of hearing what that person has to say I believe it's my responsibility to stop their actions."

"… Those words from now were irrelevant.

However, if you say you want to go, Chiharu, I've decided to follow you even to the very ends of the world."

"… The same as the ghoul. How do I put it, if you went somewhere by yourself like before, this time I'll give you a beating!

"Monster tamer. I have had with thee, until now… Uncountable debts of gratitude.

If with this thing I could make some amends… I have no reason to refuse thy wish."

"… Girls. Thanks."

I think I really have the best comrades.

While digesting my feelings of gratitude for the three girls that always support me, I dashed at full speed to the depths of the forest.

× × ×

"What… The… Heck…"

When I reached my destination, I was at a loss for words.

I had heard about it a couple of times.

That which stood before my eyes was the Abyss Gate.

The size, approximately around 20 meters?

A huge gate boasting a size a head taller than the surrounding trees let out a bizarre atmosphere.

However, what shocked me wasn't the Abyss Gate itself.

… They were the ten nearly dead monster tamers lying down around it.

"Terrible… Who could…"

Kyouko covered her mouth in shock.

Zonmi, composed before such an odd situation, examined the lying down tamers.

“If they don’t receive medical treatment asap, they’ll be in danger.

What the heck could they have been fighting to lose so much magic power…? I have no clue.”

“…”

Like Zonmi said, there are lots of baffling points in this situation.

The monster tamers around us had no conspicuous external injuries.

They were in a state of magic power depletion as if someone had sucked it out of them.

… Is such a thing possible?

With absolutely no damage on the outside, their magic power had become emptied.

“Haru-kun… Run away…”

While I was suspicious of the surrounding situation.

I heard mom’s voice from somewhere.

I looked towards the voice.

And, what awaited there was a shocking scene that unconsciously made me doubt my eyes.

“Mom!?”

Mom’s state wasn’t comparable to that of the other collapsed monster tamers.

She had suffered damage from head to toe as if until just now she had been engaged in fierce battle, and there were traces of fresh blood all over her body.

Flustered, in a flash I tried to run to mom's side.

But.

"Hallo—. Chiharu-kun. Long time no see—"

The voice of a lone woman deterred my movements of running to mom's side.

No wonder. Since I had predicted from the start that she'd be at this place.

"—Luka-san. All of this… Is it your doing?"

Let's be frank.

I'm totally scared.

Hurting mom and other unrelated people and other unforgivable things, she… Has no qualms on doing such inhuman deeds.

When I inquired, Luka-san tilted her head in an affected manner.

"Mmmmm. Half marks…? The remaining half was really these children doing!"

In the direction that Luka-san pointed saying so, there were three monster tamers somewhat familiar.

"… Long time no see, Kusumi Chiharu. I eagerly waited for the day when we settled things with you…"

"Oniichan, found you!"

“Fufufu. I looked forward for the day that we battled again.”

The ones who suddenly appeared before me were the monster tamers from the Black Tamers I had have bouts with before.

The man in a black suit (name unknown), Noelle and Lance, those three.

“… Luka-san. What’s your aim? Why have you hurt mom… And unrelated people!?”

The instant after I pressed Luka-san for an answer.

The fist of a huge beast was launched towards me.

“!?”

The one who reacted without a moment’s delay and protected me with a wall of flames was Iris, the one from among my contracted monsters that especially excelled in speed.

“… Though in the earlier battle I left thee at large enough to not take thy life… Thou incorrigibly intendest to bring harm to my master…

Have thou readiest thy resolve, black-vested tamer?”

“… Tsk. And it was a good chance to hit with my preemptive punch… This is the second time. How you dare to get in my way, red dragon!”

… Now that he mentions it, back when the incident of the attack to the Grandeel islands I had seen it once.

The man on the black suit had turned into a giant werewolf and stood before us.

“… ’d grief. This Clarie. Let’s go!”

“Those who stand in our way… I’ll kill them without arguiiiiiiing!”

One after another, those who came after me as if doing a pincer attack were Lance and Noelle—the two monster tamers who possessed a limiter.

Noelle with her arms turned into those of a golem and Lance fully turned into a grim reaper, each one entered into attack motions.

“I won’t let you!”

“Haru! Fall back!”

However, I somehow managed to avoid this surprise attack by Zonmi protecting me from Lance’s attack and Kyouko from Noelle’s attack.

“… Tamer of the Spirits, Lance Patriot.

I had heard that you were locked inside the prison of the undead tribe, but it’s really a privilege to be able to meet you here. My sisters… To you who made (did) those despicable deeds to Aruru and Meruru, I wanted to pass judgment with my own hands!”

“Ooh... Scary. But, I love strong-willed girls.

Just picturing you afterwards as part of my collection… Serving me, it gives me the shivers.”

“…! You fiend!”

Zonmi’s umbrella and Lance’s scythe clashed and raised violent sparks.

“Tamer of the Catastrophe, Noelle North Norm! I too wanted us to battle each other… How did you dare to trap me at the Saegusa festival!”

“? Who are you? Sorry. I can’t remember well the faces of people that don’t interest me. Especially in the case of people like you with a thin presence.”

“…”

SNAP

Something seems to have split inside Kyouko.

“… So. Then I’ll refresh your memory with a battle!”

Noelle arms, that were turned into those of a golem, received Kyouko’s mighty drop-kick.

Nephilim vs golem.

… Here too, as they are both power-type girls, a fierce battle is expected.

“Zonmi, Kyouko. I leave them to you!”

It’s not like I don’t have faith in Zonmi and the rest’s true might, but somehow I have an ill premonition.

I don’t know what kind of means have they employed.

However, those three I had fought with before… It looked like they had had a clearly substantial power-up from the time we fought.

“Sowwy~. It’s become boisterous.

If possible, to you… I’d tell at ease what I’m going to do now, but…”

“… Is that so?”

Saying just that, as there was no use in arguing, I hit Luka-san’s cheek with all my might.

He who moves first wins. This showdown… By no means do you have the comfort to be able to carefreely go chatting.

Like now, if the enemy gets careless… I’ll attack with full power!

“…!?”

CRASH

The sound of crashing bones.

It seems that by instantly twisting her body,, Luka-san avoided a direct hit, but… No problem.

My attack that unleashed the maou's power, even if it miss the center, it will cause fatal damage.

Perhaps… No, surely.

I felt her lower jaw get horribly destroyed.

Luka-san, who had received my attack, was sent flying seven meters straight and crashed against one of the trees growing in the surroundings.

"I did it!?"

Luka-san, who had received my attack and laid in the ground, slowly stood up.

Right on the mark, Luka-san's lower jaw was smashed to a pulp and that beautiful face had been defiled.

… Though my head thought that there was no other way, even being in a fight waging our lives, I felt terribly guilty about hitting a woman's face.

However, seconds after that.

The guilty conscience inside my heart was sent out of bounds.

"Ufufu. Chiharu-kun, you rascal. To suddenly go hitting an older woman… Hopeless kid. Oneechan… Has gotten a bit aroused."

Right then, it was… As if witnessing first-hand a ghoul's regeneration ability.

"Are you… Joking…"

Luka-san, in a bit of a moment.

Not even five seconds had passed and her lower jaw who should have been smashed to bits regenerated, allowing her to be able to speak as if nothing had happened.

"…"

Different.

There's definitely something different from the guys I've fought until now.

I couldn't stop the chills in my spine.

Standing before Luka-san, I was tormented by the strange sensation of standing before hundreds of monsters at once.

"… Don't make that face, Chiharu-kun.

Aren't you being able to stand before a long-awaited foe you can fight with showing each other your precious full power?

This experience… Since it may not come again in your life… For now let's enjoy a pure battle♥"

"!?"

Luka-san, showing a bewitching smile, uprooted a huge tree about 10 meters tall.

"!?"

It's not only a ghoul's regenerative ability.

I don't know what contrivance has made it possible, but it seems that Luka-san owns a power on par with a Nephilim.

"Here~. A present from oneechan♥"

Like that, Luka-san threw at me the huge tree that she was holding.

I give up. Attacking with power at 30%… Doing something so half-hearted will definitely get me killed.

However, my limiter has a time limit.

If I fight at full power, in no more than five minutes, my magic power will get depleted.

… There's no helping it.

How about getting one gear more up?

As I release my limiter to 50%, like that wings grew from my back and I soared to the air.

I narrowly avoided the huge tree.

Definitely, it's reassuring having the ability to fly.

To recover my pace, while staying in mid-air, I cooled my head and thought about my next strategy.

However.

"… Did you thought that by flying to the sky you'd be safe?"

A woman's voice hinting adult composure whispered into my ear.

At point-blank range in the span of a breath.

Turning back, there she was.

While flapping crimson wings disproportionately large in respect to her own body. Luka-san… Laughed behind me.

"… Chiharu-kun. Could your full power only be that?

Quickly… Quickly show me your full power!"

Next instant, my vision was dyed red.

As it was such an abrupt happening, for a moment I couldn't comprehend what had been done to me.

"… Guwah!"

When I finally sorted out the situation, my body had been thrown against the ground from high up in the sky.

… What happened?

That must be it. Luka-san has produced flames from the palms of her own hands, burned my wings to a crisp and like that I plunged into the ground.

I feel that I have several broken bones, but this time that's fine.

Due to the severe burns on my body, I've fallen into a distressing situation where I can't even breathe, but this time that doesn't matter.

Both of them, as long as there's magic power left the damage suffered can be recovered in a flash by the limiter.

However, what the heck is this?

A ghoul's recovering ability.

A Nephilim's power.

A red dragon's flight & flames.

Luka-san… Has she housed inside one body the strong points of those three at the same time!?

"… How come."

"? What would it be?"

By the time I noticed, several questions had spilled from my lips.

“How come… How come this thing!?

You weren’t so strong, were you?…!

We… Should both have the same feeling of wanting to help the world!

And despite that… Wasn’t there any other way!?”

“…”

When I inquired, Luka-san looked at me with sorrow and slowly started to narrate.

“… Why don’t I tell you an allegory?

The humans and monsters who live in this world, if we liken them to paint colors, red, blue, yellow. Each and every one of them is wonderful… The colors called individuality.”

Starting with a “but”, Luka-san continued.

“Even if one by one the colors are wonderful… When you mix all of the colors in a palette, what color do you think you get?

—the answer is a crooked ugly grey.

It’s not like it’s anyone’s fault.

Even if there’s no ill will, when lots of consciousness get mixed, the world instantly becomes a slightly dirty color. That’s why I… Expose the people responsible for the incident of ten years ago… Making them pay for their crimes, I don’t intend anything like that.

The one wrong is not an individual—rather it’s the world.

That’s why I’ve decided to remake the world at once.

I’ll destroy the Abyss Gate, and riding in the chaos, I’ll rule the world from the top!

And I… Will guide every living being on this world in the correct direction so that just one unique color is shown!”

“…”

It’s not like I don’t understand Luka-san’s claim.

School and society unanimously teach kids that “individuality is wonderful”.

However, If we go perusing history, we can’t honestly praise individuality.

—Because of differences in thinking, people engage in arguments.

—Because of differences in skin color, people engage in discrimination.

—Because of differences in what should be protected, people engage in war.

If such a thing as individuality didn’t exist… The world may have been more peaceful. The incident ten years ago where more than thousand people in total lost their lives due to the IMA’s behind-the-scenes inhuman research may have too have been prevented.

“… However, let’s say that goes well, a hundred years later… What about the world after you’ve died!? The world after they’ve lost their just leader… Won’t it become more wretched than now?!”

“Ufufu. Thanks for your worries. But, it’s alright. Since me dying won’t ever be possible.”

“… Eh?”

“I mean… It’s for that that I got my hands on this unaging immortal body.”

“…”

What haz diz gurl sayz?

“The leader who holds the correct color will keep ruling with eternal life.

That’s the full story behind the Arcadia project us Black Tamers aim for!”

“…”

I can’t follow the logic of her speech.

Eternal life? Unaging and immortal?

Such a living being… how could it exist in this…

“You’re putting an unsatisfied expression. Fine. I’ll show you.

The legendary monster tamer… Kusumi Kanae, my true form that overwhelmed even her—‘ultimate perfect form Great Luka-san’—

Level… Overlimit”

The instant after she muttered just that.

My body was struck by an unprecedented amount of magic power unlike anything I had felt until now.

“… Kuh!”

And then one more surprising thing happened.

… What the heck is this?

The trees growing around Luka-san wilted all at once, the earth became barren and cracked after that.

“She’s sucking the magic power from her surroundings… Perhaps…!?”

Let’s take it as if the situation that’s happening right before me is like I said, the mysterious phenomenon of all those laying monster tamers with no signs of battle, only emptied of magic power, when I came here would tentatively be explained.

While Luka-san was sucking the magic power from the living beings around her, she grew larger like a snowball rolling on the ground.

The form she finally took… Was ‘something’ resembling a huge snake.

‘Something’… Calling it like that is because I had no other simile to express what the heck was that.

Since I couldn’t grasp its whole image from the ground, to check that ‘something’, flapping my wings, I once again flew to air.

“What the heck… Is this…”

Looking down from the sky, once I had at last a whole picture before my eyes, I was left speechless.

This… Can it really be called a living being?

It mainly has the shape of a serpent, but eye, arms, legs, wings, the result was something that has those all over the place.

That length, doesn’t it easily surpass one kilometer?

Of Luka-san herself, it was just the upper body, the lower half being turned into the head and body of a serpent.

The thing left barely humanlike was just that one point.

“Ufufu. How’s it?

The unaging and immortal body achieved after researching for ten years… ‘Ultimate perfect form Great Luka-san’?”

“…”

What kind of comment does this person expect from me?

“Ufufu. It seems that you are still too young to understand this body’s magnificence.

In a normal person’s case, just by successfully inserting into them the cells of a single monster species, they reach their limit, but… I was different.

My body had the ability of being able to take in cells from lots of monster species at the same time!

That’s why I got perfected.

The ultimate body with the feature of, by adjusting the balance of the monster cells of more than a hundred of species it has embedded at the same time, changes the life energy of the surrounding beings into magic power and rejuvenates the cells!

This body I don’t call it neither First nor Second… It’s called Third.”

“…”

Ultimate perfect form Great Luka-san.

It would be good if I could attach a smile to this joke-like name, but her form is nothing to laugh for.

Ironically, her aspect. Is the chaotic gray obtained by mixing different individualities that she had spoken of earlier.

It looked like the embodiment of how things were in this world.

“Chiharu-kun. I’ll go as far as giving you one last chance more.

If you cooperate with us, you’ll be perfected by our Arcadia project.

If, by mass-producing the strongest monster species that is the chimera of a maou and a human, we could raise them as soldiers… Our organization could very easily climb to the peak of the world.

Isn't that great?"

"… Mass-producing the strongest species… That's quite a disturbing speech."

"You can be at ease.

I understand that you are not for blood-reeking jobs, and if possible I don't want to continue with inhuman researches.

That's why… I want my methods to be as much humane as possible.

Specifically… In the event of you joining our organization… I promise not to give you any job other than baby-making!

The Black Tamers will gather only cute girls picked of course from among the best of the organization… And make you your very own harem.

Eei. Get that, you thieve! If you wish I can award you with the right of making children with either me or Noelle?

Ufufu? How's it?

Wouldn't that make a boy glad~"

"…"

That the somewhat fascinating conditions that Luka-san proposed snatched my heart just a bit will be a secret.

Nevertheless.

"I refuse!

Regrettably, I… Since I'm a big pervert with a monster fetish and sister complex, I don't get aroused by bodies other than those of monster girls or my little sister! Since such a disposition… I've been trained into it by them!"

I… Could promptly refuse her temptation.

Why, you say… My conclusion regarding this matter was decided long ago.

I don't know about difficult things such as guiding the world in the correct direction.

For that reason, I… Have decided to only fight for the sake of the important people besides me.

"… Is that so. I have mixed feelings as your former superior.

When I first met you… You couldn't decide by yourself even which girl to make a contract with… You were an indecisive good-for-nothing kid, and yet… The you right now has the eyes of a boy with a firm resolution.

Frankly… The you right now is cool.

Unbecoming of my age, oneechan's heart is throbbity-throb.

But, y'know. But, but…"

Luka-san, saying that with a tone of putting on airs,

"Then, die♥"

With a refreshing smile, sentenced me to death.

What do I do now?

GUNYU GUNYU

Luka-san, winding octopus legs-like thing that came from her own body… Started to create countless giant arms by aggregating them.

Very carefully surveying, at the tip of the most enormous of them a big gaping hole was opened.

“!?”

And, the next instant.

From the tip of the arm created by Luka-san… She shot a high-speed energy bullet.

Let me say first that it was totally by chance that I managed to avoid her attack… Rather, it would be better to say that her attack had no intention of striking.

The energy bullet shot by Luka-san missed my body, and like that it made contact with Mt. Fuji.

*KABOOO

However, I… So as to protect the people dear to me and the world the people dear to me love, have to stop with all my might the advancement of her plans.

I'm unwilling but there's no room to it.

This time, for sure, it's my genuine… 100%!

Invoking my trump card of fully turning into a monster, while tracing a spiraling trajectory, I charged against the enemy before me.

× × ×

This was the start.

Even fighting at full strength, I don't feel like I can win…

For me, if I attacked making best use of my speed and plunged at my opponent's bosom, against she who has a humongous body, I think that the battle could progress with a limited advantage on my part, but…

Her essence, which seems to have been made by mixing cells of monsters of more than a hundred of species… Is close to being insubstantial and unstructured

Although since a while ago I have attempted on countless occasions to get close relying on maneuverability, Luka-san's body; protected by the uncountable tentacle-like things, didn't let me pick up my pace in the least.

Soon the time limit I can maintain my limiter will draw near.

I must decide this showdown in one go…

Thinking after this fact, me trying to rush this showdown may have been what left me out of luck.

"!?"

“Ufufu. I caught you~”

Did hurrying the showdown make me adopt an almost straight-line trajectory?

Just attacking by relying on speed gave me an advantage against her, and yet… With the zillionth tentacle attack from today she finally bound me.

“…!”

This thing!

Making full use of my limiter, I tore off one after another the tentacles that grew from Luka-san’s body.

But, however.

Even if I tore them off, since from the tentacles grew other tentacles, no matter how much I resist, my body won’t be released.

“… One last thing, Chiharu-kun.

Don’t be so pessimistic facing death. Since your body, after this, will keep on living as a part of me.”

Saying that, Luka-san shot at me the same high-speed bullet that a while before had blown away Mt. Fuji.

I give up.

Luka-san plans on blasting up my body with her own tentacles.

However, even knowing that, I don’t have any way to counteract the oncoming attack.

“Goodbye, Chiharu-kun.”

Before my consciousness blew off, I think I heard Luka-san’s words.

× × ×

“Eh… Uh…?”

Why… Am I still alive.

As almighty as my limiter is, nonetheless, it doesn’t seem like I can receive an attack that blew away a mountain yet still be alive.

… Even if I say that, the limiter that was my last ray of hope should have been completely cancelled by now, though.

“… Aaah. That’s right.”

Guessing from the line that Luka-san said at the end.

Luka-san is planning on absorbing my body into her own.

To her, it would be a drawback if she blew away my body without leaving a trace.

For that reason, I… Could survive in such a wretched state.

The bones in my hands and legs were smashed in pieces, like a turned up jigsaw puzzle, but since my body’s magic power had completely ran out, there didn’t seem to be any signs of restoration.

Ahaha.

If the situation has worsened to this point, no matter what miracle happens, I can no longer picture any way of winning against her.

The only possibility I can think of is, after Zonmi and the rest finish their battles, if they rush up to my side…

“They won’t be coming to save you.”

Plainly declared Luka-san, as if seeing through my thinking.

“It’s a pity.

The sweeties you rely on looks like they have been totally overpowered by my subordinates with their magic power drastically raised by using the dragon blood that we harvested from the red dragons five years ago.”

What appeared into my sight along with Luka-san’s words were three dark human shadows.

“… Haha! The great me with dragon blood is invincible! Right now I feel the greatest! I’ve perfectly returned what I owed to that nasty red dragon!”

“Kyahaha! Is it oniichan’s turn next?”

“Fuhahaha. At last! At last the curtain has risen for our aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaage!

“…”

Aaah. What’s with this.

In Noelle’s arms, turned into those of a golem, there were the figures of Zonmi, Kyouko and Iris, battered from head to toe and hanging their heads.

Move!

Please move, body of mine!

They can do what they please with me, but at least I want to save the girls.

Had my body any strength left for speaking, I’ll kowtow or anything to ask for that, but my body, with all it’s bones cracked, unfortunately can’t move.

“Well… Chiharu-kun. Become one with me. Let’s burn together into our retinas the dawn of a new world. Isn’t it great?”

“…”

Darn!…

It seems that my devil’s luck has run out.

It’s a pity, but, including me, there’s no allies left to go against the Black Tamers. If we liken it to the world of games, the party has been wiped out.

Sorry, Zonmi.

Sorry, Kyouko. Sorry, Iris.

Sorry… Everyone.

The moment I gave up on the fight and closed my eyes.

“I won’t let you!”

From somewhere I thought I heard a voice I missed.

Who is the one there…?

What entered my fuzzy and dim line of sight was glossy black hair that unconsciously made you want to caress it & big and round innocent eyes.

Could it be that you are…!?

“Oniichan! Manami’s virginity! Take it!”

“!?”

To tell you the truth, there’s no way that the me back then could have understood in the least (slightest) the words that she had sputtered.

However, they were the words of my little sister with whom I had spent more than ten years, and for that reason, I intuitively guessed what I should do next.

Mustering the last of my strength, with my eyes closed, I pushed up my right arm up high.

What now.

SLIP

I felt like if something had slipped into my pinky.

Within my faint consciousness, I made sure of what was that which my sister had risked her life to bring me.

"…?"

Contract ring.

It was surely a contract ring.

…

……

Hey, hey. Wait a minute.

Sis. Even if I'm in quite a desperate pinch, isn't that a bit too much lacking in judgement?

It's not necessary to explain it now… The contract ring is a device used for making a pact between a human and a monster.

Putting it on a fellow human is decidedly nonsense.

But, however.

The instant I held that thought.

The contract ring I had just put on started to let out a big glow like never before.

"… Whoa!? The heck!?"

This glowing is the unmistakable proof of a contract completion!

But, how the heck!?

What reason could have led to a contract between fellow humans.

"It's sister power's injection turn! Boost!"

And the moment after my sister chanted that incantation.

Manami's magic power flowed into me.

"Amazing…"

I unconsciously couldn't help but leak a voice of admiration.

To the extent that the quantity of magic power my sister infused me with was inexhaustible, that it became drops of golden light that I could clearly see with my own eyes, and my body that until just now I couldn't so much as twitch was fixed instantly.

Moreover, that wasn't all.

"… What's this? Strength is filling me from the depths of my body."

"Wonderful. If it's me right now… I feel like I won't lose to anyone."

"The magic power of the little sister is reaching us through the tamer…? Could it be…!? This…!?"

Zonmi, Kyouko, Iris, the bodies of the three of them, like mine, started to glow in golden light and they got back the will to fight.

A full recovery to when before fighting… No, the magic power in their bodies surpasses full recovery…?

“Impudent braaaaaat! No matter how many times we fight, the result will be the same!”

Most likely, he planned to reach a conclusion before my sister’s magic power reached (ended).

The monster tamer in a black suit who turned into a werewolf bared his fangs against Iris.

“Iris!?”

“… Gyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!?”

However, the one who cried like that was the werewolf.

The werewolf was engulfed whole by an azure flame and couldn’t help but roll on the floor.

“Iris’s flames… Azure…!?”

Now that you mention it, I think that they taught me this in chemistry.

Azure flames have a higher energy quantity than regular red flames and hold a high calorific value.

How come Iris can suddenly produce azure flames?

The answer… If we assume it's because of the golden light we are wrapped with…

Like that, the earlier showdown ended instantly.

“… Darn! What the blazes. These movements…!?”

Wrapped in golden light, Zonmi, her speed remarkably risen, got to a level where she produced afterimages, as if many Zonmis were fighting at the same time.

“…Gubaah!”

Lance received Zonmi’s piercing attacks in succession from her umbrella.

“Lance Patriot. No matter the circumstances… Your deed of brainwashing us ghouls… Your large number of felonies by no means can be forgiven. Receive your reward once again in the other world!”

“… Kuh! This me can’t catch up in speed… Is it…!?”

If it’s the me right now revived by my sister’s power, I can barely follow with my eyes.

Although each of Zonmi’s attacks’ power don’t make a big change by themselves, you could say that their number is on a whole new level.

After all… That’s only natural.

Zonmi, in this short time… Has already hit Lance more than a thousand times.

“Guaaaaaaaaah!?”

As a result of receiving in succession Zonmi’s fierce like a storm consecutive attacks… Lance’s transformation got undone.

It was a flawless seemingly not dangerous victory very much like Zonmi and her honor student disposition.

“Taaaaaaaaah!”

“… Han! No matter how many times, it’s useless!”

Noelle turned her arms into rock and guarded from Kyouko’s fist.

Before that overwhelming defense, Kyouko’s attack looked like it was stopped, but…

“… What!?”

CREAKCREAKCREAK

Noelle’s arms made a sound and got smashed.

The revived Kyouko’s attack at last got through Noelle’s defense.

“… Get ready! You ill-natured girl!”

With a villainous face unbecoming of a girl, like that, Kyouko straddled Noelle getting into a mount position.

“Woah!? Stop!? Don’t joke…!? Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

Kyouko didn’t hold back and, like that, she punched Noelle’s face. She punched. She punched.

“…”

By repeatedly attacking with no hesitation, making me who was looking draw away, she achieved victory.

That’s really like Kyouko.

Soundly speaking, hearing it is enough, but it was a too plain way of winning that won’t be shown onto screen.

“… What the heck is this? What has happened?”

Luka-san was in dismay not understanding the situation before her.

Without paying attention to Luka-san, this time I somehow could make a guess about the phenomenon that’s taking place before my eyes.

As you know, I am a chimera born from a human and maou.

What would happen if that me makes a contract with my sister, who has the blood of the strongest monster tamer, mom?

The answer is easy. Crystal clear.

The contract ring should have perceived me as a monster and my sister as a monster tamer, and completed the contract.

In other words, if we explain the current situation in an easy-to-understand way.

→ Zonmi

Manami → Me → Kyouko

→ Iris

This kind of unexpected double-layered contract was established.

Of course, this kind of foul play-like technique can only be pulled off by me, who has the disposition of a monster and the disposition of a monster tamer.

"… Luka-san."

Calling the name of the archenemy before my eyes, I approached her step by step.

"Right here, right now, I who has the blood of the strongest monster, dad, and my sister who has the blood of the strongest monster tamer, mom, have made a contract. Do you understand what this means?"

"Who knows… I don't understand. Tell me."

Luka-san's expression, different from a while ago, somewhat looked as if her composure had disappeared.

"Strongest + stongest gives superstrongest!!"

After loudly proclaiming that, releasing my limiter to 100%… No, 120%, I took to the sky.

Then, something surprising happened.

I definitely can't lose.

Was it for strongly thinking that the one image I vividly pictured in my mind broke out?

The image in my head, before long… Became as clear as if it was there.

In the end, really… The sword I pictured in my head materialized in my hand.

Haven't I seen this sword somewhere…!?

The name, if I'm not wrong, wasn't it 'Shiden'?

Lilith-san had brought me before to the former maou's office.

Then, I remember that she told me that it was the former maou's favorite weapon.

Then, why has it materialized now in my hand?

"Goooo! Oniichaaaaaaaaaaaaan!"

Receiving my sister's cheers, I promptly came back to my senses.

… Let's skip the details.

In any case, if I could defeat the foe before me, that'd be good—.

"Taaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

I flew with (at) full power towards Luka-san; turned into an enormous snake.

On the way, Luka-san tried many times to block me with her tentacles, but having made a contract with my sister and my limiter released to 120%, to me those movements looked still.

Slipping through Luka-san's attacks, at last I managed to land on her a stroke of my sword.

From the sword I held *CRACKLE CRACKLE* black lightning was shot.

It looks like this blade… Not only inflicts damage by the sheer attack, it seems that it confers damage by lightning.

"Hu~mph. Superb power. But, it's a pity.

Didn't I say it? My body can generate magic power on a semipermanent basis. This kind of damage will be recovered in an instant… Wha!"

I realized why Luka-san's face turned pale in an instant.

The limbs that Luka-san had regrown turned ashen grey, became countless particles and disappeared into the air.

"This power, could it be…!? The former maou's characteristic power of returning any magic power to nothing…!?"

I heard Luka-san muttering something, but since I was concentrating only on what was before my eyes, my ears didn't pick up her words.

Using the weapon I was grasping tightly, I slashed at the enemy before me.

"… Kuh!"

Luka-san trued to capture me by manipulating more than ten tentacles at the same time, but I was easy slipping through her attacks.

There may no longer exist in this world anyone who can catch the me revived by borrowing my sister's power.

Moving by weaving my way between the approaching tentacles, I poured a storm of attacks onto the enemy before my eyes.

Luka-san, with each slash of my weapon, raised a heartbreaking scream and was made to cancel her transformation.

“That… My… Arcadia plan that I had nurtured for ten years… Crumbling away… In such a joke-like manner…”

“…”

Until the very end, I held no sympathy for Luka-san’s methods, but there’s a bit of pity.

Even if it was nothing to be proud of, having the plan you had bet your life on… Foiled by the likes of me who popped out of nowhere, surely you won’t accept it.

“… Sorry. Instantly turning the scene into a joke no matter how serious it was is my sister’s expertise.”

That’s why, I… To her who stuck with her own justice to the extent of losing her human form, I plan to stop her while showing respect.

Luka-san, her transformation completely dispelled by my attacks, turned into human form and got thrown in midair.

“Luka-san. In the end, I, till the last moment… Couldn’t endorse your plan of sacrificing some to save the many.

However… The feelings for that world you’ve devoted your power to save no matter the methods surely have not been in vain.

That’s why, now… Rest at ease, please.”

“…”

When I told my honest thoughts, I felt that Luka-san’s face seemed to clear as if demons had stopped haunting her.

“I leave this world to you… Chiharu-kun.”

“Yeah. Leave it to me.”

So that Luka-san’s body didn’t crash into the ground, I caught her in midair.

Losing her limiter, Luka-san’s body is surprisingly light.

Nevertheless, the hopes that she had entrusted to me were in no way light.

In this way, the curtain was drawn for this long-lasting fight… Rather, the real battle may start now for me.

Looking at her sleeping face of being wounded all over, that was what I thought in the end.

Epilogue

Since then.

Four years have passed by.

The days since that one when our fight with Luka-san ended have passed in the blink of an eye.

Saying it like this may reek of an old man, but… They often say that time waits for no one and that the time known as a person's teens is but an instant in a long life.

I, Kusumi Chiharu, welcome this very day; my twentieth birthday.

"Chiharu. Once again, thanks for bearing with me."

When I got home, Zonmi, wearing the tattered T-shirt that I handed her quite a long time ago, came to greet me.

"… That you still haven't throw out."

"Yeah. Since it's the first present that you gave me, Chiharu. Forever and ever… Until this body rots, I'll cherish it."

"… That'd be speaking for long term."

The undead tribe is known as a long-lived race even among monsters, and rounding it down it seems that Zonmi thinks of cherishing the T-shirt that I handed to her for around three centuries.

"Now that I think of it… Have you made contact with Kyouko or Iris?"

"… I beg your pardon. I've been busy with home issues and haven't had the time to contact those two."

"I see. Since all of you have been busy at work everyday, it can't be helped."

As you know, the Princess of the Ghouls.

Zonmi Ra McKenzie has welcomed her birthday a step ahead from me and has grown into an adult woman

Zonmi, as of now.

Having earned the achievement of saving the human world from the Black Tamers, she became the ghoul's clan first queen.

"… Even if we say that, I'm still nothing more than a figurehead. The one who holds the essential authority is my father."

"It's amazing nonetheless, Zonmi."

Zonmi, who had saved the world from a crisis, earned high support as the hero of the ghoul clan and, as a result, the queenly path once closed to her had opened, but… It seems that she herself was currently realizing that her own power was not enough.

With the support of her sisters Aruru & Meruru, she was wholeheartedly striving for further prosperity of the ghoul clan.

"O—h. It's been so long since I came to this house. How nostalgic. It's the scent of Haru's home."

"Kyouko!?"

Kurose Kyouko. 20 yo.

By now, there isn't a day her name is not heard of in the Netherworld's media.

Kyouko, motivated by the big trauma she experienced with the Netherworld's food when she travelled there with us, she developed a talent as a capable female firm president who manages more than 20,000 restaurants in a mere 4 years.

Of course, the feat of increasing by lawful means in four years from her own shop to twenty thousand stores is next to a miracle. I've known just recently from the Netherworld's media, but it seems that there has been a series of M&A (mergers and acquisitions of different companies) bordering the illegality.

Now that I mention it this girl… She once thought of stealing the contract from Zonmi. Thinking like this, Kyouko, unexpectedly… May be a girl with a forte of stealing other people's achievements.

"… Hey, Haru. Right now, you, haven't you thought of something terribly rude about me?"

"H-how would I, of course I did not!?"

"Hu-mph. It's suspicious that you've suddenly changed to a polite tone, but since today is a special day… I'll let it slide."

"…"

A close call.

Most likely, Kyouko has went through many hardships in these four years and her intuition has sharpened.

Expect her **chorokawaii** disposition from until now and you may get hurt.

"… Nu. Excuse me for being late, Chiharu. The afternoon lectures ended up being stretched a tad."

"Iris… Is it you?"

The last time I saw her was forever ago.

Though we have exchanged letters a couple of times, it may have been around three years since we actually last met.

"… Sorry. Excuse me, but I shall borrow a seat without delay. With these… It can't be helped that my shoulders get stiff."

Muttered Iris, lowering her chest on the table.

"… Y-yeah."

Meeting again after 3 years, no wonder I behave strange.

In the while that I haven't see her, Iris… Erm… Bodywise, she seems to have had a plentiful development that unconsciously makes you unable to stand out of surprise, and her body clad in a red dress like those of red dragons brings about a voluptuous sensuality .

T-these are…

D… No, they may be E cups.

As expected, if compared with the original boobs daimajin Lilith-san she'll lost in terms of volume, but unexpectedly Iris's chest has grown this much—.

""""…""""

Contrasting with me, who was rejoicing at Iris's growth in a pure way & a wicked way, Zonmi & Kyouko's expressions clouded.

Suddenly, while patting their own chests, they were wrapped in *GLOOM!* a heavy mood like someone who has gotten back from a funeral.

"I lost… To that red dragon…!? It's the first time that I tasted this sense of loss as a woman."

“By some chance… No need to guess, I am the one with the smallest chest from all the girls here!?”

By the way, there’s a reason for the fact that out of us four, only Iris has grown in outward appearance.

I, Zonmi, and Kyouko, us three were already 16 when we met.

Even if 4 years have passed invoking the eternal seventeen (christened by my sister) peculiar of monsters, In fact, we’ve only aged a year’s share, but… Iris is different.

In Iris’s case, since she was outside of the scope where eternal seventeen would apply, like that she shows a growth of four years.

Iris Scarlet Lindwurm.

She who had more interest than others in ‘knowing’ from among the one’s we’ve met, as she declared, from Netherworld high school to university, she skipped grades and graduated in a mere 3 years, and currently she holds a position as teaching staff at a Netherworld university.

With knowledge that puts adults to shame and a lovely appearance, Iris’s lectures have become already so popular that students from other universities go to attend them.

“Since we are all gathered, do I announce that now?

What I couldn’t make my mind on four years ago… Let’s start with the continuation of that day.”

“““““…”””””

Four years.

Until the day that’s today, four years have gone by.

A man who has delayed this far the reply to a girl’s confession, wouldn’t it be a historical existence?

Even I am amazed with my indecisiveness, but… Surprisingly, Zonmi, Kyouko and Iris, those three nevertheless have waited for my reply today.

The truth is, I… Think I’m a man with the utmost happiness of receiving the favor of the best girls.

“The girl I choose as my girlfriend. That is…”

I’ve started with my confession, yet, miraculously, the mood didn’t grow strained.

No matter who’s chosen, no hard feelings.

Could it be… Maybe the three, in their hearts, have reached that agreement.

“You… All of you!”

“““““…?”””””

Next instant after I replied to their confessions.

The atmosphere promptly turned into silence, and the three of them at once fell into a daze with faces of “I don’t understand what’s going on”.

…

……

Eeerm. Yeah.

To some extent, it’s like I had predicted, but this mood is quite painful.

Inside the silent mood as if time had stopped, the one who was first to show reaction to my conclusion was, unexpectedly, Kyouko.

“Wait, Haru! What the heck does that mean!?”

BLAM

Raising a loud noise by banging the table, Kyouko bared her feelings.

“Cut the bad jokes! We… It’s not like we have been waiting for four years wanting to hear those words! Is this a manga or a game!? Haru, you think you’ve been born in a country that allows polygyny or something!?”

Hearing Kyouko’s words, the other girls too raised after that words of objection.

“Of course it't like that in an overwhelming number of countries in the human world, but in all of Netherworld without exception multiple marriages are forbidden. Like the Nephilim has said, I also don’t believe that your idea, Chiharu, is a feasible option.”

“If such is the response thy hath given, I shall comply, but… In many a sense the option of multiple wedlock will be difficult.”

“…”

Until now, it’s roughly as I predicted.

I’m not the MC from a harem love comedy… If anyone is told this… Crazy thing, they will refuse.

“… Well, understood.

In that case, you lot, if you found that my conclusion was feasible… Would you consent then?”

"… Understood. If that thing was possible, I'll agree.

Something like polygyny, thinking normally, would be impossible, but… It's not like I… Hate these girls."

"… It's not like I have no objections, but if I can receive your affection, Chiharu… I… Even so."

"If I can be by thy side, I shan't question the means."

"…"

Good.

If I didn't get their consent here, in a certain sense, my… Efforts these four years may had been for naught, but It seems that my worries ended as needless anxiety.

"… Girls, thank you. First, I want you to watch this."

What I took out, waiting for the right time, was, to be frank, my home's TV remote.

Since I've been living a busy life recently, I didn't have many chances to watch TV and it was totally covered in dust.

Coordinating my timing by looking at the clock, once I had confirmed that the time was exactly 17:00, I turned on the TV.

And now, what.

'… The show's still midway, but we have an special news feed to broadcast just now.'

Yeah!

Just timing! [note: engrish; it should be something like "right on the mark"]

It seems that, like I had planned beforehand, I could catch the start of the news program.

‘What we dwellers of the human world feared has happened at last.

Seven months ago. Kusumi Chiharu-san was inaugurated as the 48th maou of the Netherworld and has established many ground-breaking laws to build friendly relationships between humans and monsters, but… As if us humankind would be deceived by his actions!

Look!

This is a copy of a threatening letter from the maou that the Japanese government has received.

What’s terrible is that the maou, by brandishing his tremendous influence schemes to intervene in the law-making of our country!

Let’s read the maou’s demands.

Make polygyny fully legal in the human world, as well as in the Netherworld. However, restricted to just men who can definitely make girls happy.

… We don’t know what kind of intentions the current maou has with these requests.

However, because of this turmoil, clashes with women right activists from all over the globe are expec…’

“…”

Listening until there, I turned off the TV with the remote.

“… Then, well, it’s like that.

From now on, I think the age has come where, be it polygyny, be it harem, such a lifestyle can be led with no one talking behind anyone’s back.”

“““““…”””””

Taking as truth the surprise I had prepared for them, darting their eyes about in bewilderment, the monster girl trio got stiff.

Aah.

That's right.

I've told you the 'after that' of the girls I will be marrying, but I still haven't told the story of none other than myself.

I, who during the battle with Luka-san could brandish the treasured sword used by the former maou—"Shiden", was advised by Lilith-san that "What about you try to become the Netherworld's maou?"

They say that the weapon called Shiden is a special weapon that can only be brandished by those who meet the qualifications as the rightful maou successor… After that, I, in the blink of an eye, put aside the many other maou candidates and was inaugurated to the maou's seat.

Though I say it like that, the way till now has by no means been a bed of roses.

I've been taught day after day, fourteen hours a day, by Lilith-san, who took over the position of a tutor, and there has been more and more open harassment from the rest of the maou candidates that didn't look so glad of my dancing ahead.

Nevertheless, what made me hang on without complaints… Was the sense of responsibility from crumbling Luka-san's ongoing Arcadia project.

So as to verify that I had done the correct thing… I must lead the world in the proper direction by becoming the maou.

… In the very beginning, even if I, who ended up using my own authority for my self-interest, say that, it may lack in persuasiveness.

To me, rather than choosing one from among these three… Since changing the world's legislation was easier, there's no helping it.

“Haru! I love youuuuu!”

“Nwah!?”

As I thought about those things, Kyouko suddenly hugged my body.

Since it was something so sudden, I couldn’t help being pushed to my home’s wooden floor.

“… Wha, what are you doing all of a sudden, Nephilim!?”

“Fufufu. Ghoul. Still don’t realize?

From now on, like Haru said, the age has come when polygyny is a natural thing, hasn’t it?

Right now, what Haru has said has already become the greatest thing in the world. It's only natural.

… But, No matter how much it is allowed by the laws, Haru has only a single body!

In other words… From now on, to be the one who can make out the most with Haru, it’s first come, first served!”

“““!?””””

With Kyouko’s speech, as if suddenly realizing something, Zonmi & Iris’s eyes immediately changed colors.

“… My apologies, Chiharu.”

After Kyouko, Iris moved.

Like Kyouko, Iris tightly hugged me and, like that, she overlapped my lips with hers.

…

……

I think that she subtly used her tongue, but for now let's leave it as me overthinking things.

"Iris-chan! S-sly! Me too!"

I was struck by Iris's surging waves attack and, straight away, next comes Kyouko.

"~~~~!?"

Kyouko's kiss was more intensely passionate than Iris's.

Since I can't tell how much intensely passionate it was 'cos I'm embarrassed, let's draw a thick veil over it.

Crap.

I hadn't noticed it until just now.

Could it be… That if I marry these three at once it will be like this everyday!? If every day is this hardcore, will my stamina last!?

"… Fine by you, ghoul? Keep idle and us two will monopolize Haru?"

"I-I. That…"

Although Kyouko stirred her up, Zonmi was in a daze as if she didn't know what would be the best thing to do.

"… Chiharu! Forgive me!"

After a few seconds, as if she had readied her resolve, following Kyouko and Iris, Zonmi too fell on my body.

H-heavy…

I won't say it no matter what before these three, but as expected, supporting the weight of three people is very taxing.

“…”

In the span of a sigh, her face was close.

Following Kyouko & Iris, Zonmi’s lips were about to touch my lips, at that time.

(Summon—oniichan!)

I think I heard from somewhere a voice that I missed.

× × ×

When I woke up, I was on a bed with my four limbs held by cuffs.

… What the heck, this déjà vu.

This… Very nostalgic.

To me it once was such a daily scene like an early afternoon coffee break, but recently I had remarkably lost the chance to experience this situation.

“Fufufu. Oniichan. You woke up—“

“That voice… Manami, is it you…!?”

To tell the truth… It has been longer since Manami and I saw each other than it was with Iris.

Even so… As expected of a human?

My sister appearance had transformed beyond recognition compared to four years ago.

Firstly, huge.

Anything and everything, many places had plenty of volume.

By some chance, has her height reached 170 centimeters?

My sister boasted of sexy proportions ever since before, but after four years, those strong points had improved their ranks.

Is having any hairstyle suit them a special privilege of beautiful people?

Her prided black hair had grown so much that it even reaches the ground, but mysteriously there wasn't a dirty impression.

"Of course♪

Oniichan's cute little sister… Hey! Ain't I now the older sister—?

How moving. Manami is already 18 this year, but oniichan's body age has stopped at 17."

"…"

Holy mackerel.

It seems that while I wasn't looking my little sister has turned into my older sister.

… I don't know myself what's what, but it's vexing that I feel like my sister's words have a point.

"How should I put it, Manami. You, can you afford to be here!? Don't you have loads of work?"

"No worries. For today's sake, half a year ago I made room for some free time when adjusting my schedule. It's been a long time since us siblings were alone without pests, oniichan♪!"

"…"

Kusumi Manami. 18 yo.

Occupation, king of the monster tamers… Maou.

To be frank, my sister seems to possess more talent than the legendary monster tamer, mom, and in a mere 4 years she climbed to the top of all of the monster tamers.

In other words… Us siblings, currently.

We've each become maous who control either the human world or the Netherworld.

Thinking like that, us siblings' reunion, even as a casual event, is a miracle since it now looks like something of a large scale.

"Fufufufu. That aside, oniichan. Isn't there a thing for which you have to apologize to Manami?"

"Apologize for what…!?"

When I timidly inquired, my sister let out a perfect appealing smile that you'd unconsciously admire with an "as expected of maou-sama!"

"Oniichan, did you know?

That what made Manami give up on oniichan four years ago… Was because she thought that you'll choose only one special girl, oniichan?"

"In other words… What do you mean by that?"

"If you'll enter the harem route like this, then take Manami as your wife too! If not, I won't accept it!"

"…"

By no means.

No matter if the world allows polygyny, nonetheless marrying your little sister is taboo.

My sister… Is she saying that she wants me to make a law that allows siblings to marry?

"Before that, could I ask you one thing? How come you… Know what I was talking about a while ago?"

Thinking it once again, I feel that it has been like this since before.

"… Fufufu. Could you not make light of your sister?

That, isn't it definitely because the powerful microchip that I stealthily inserted into oniichan's body gives me detained information!"

"…"

Holy cow.

My sister did something like that under the forced pretense of accurately getting info about me?

These preparations, if possible, I'd like that she withdrew them.

"Well, then. Oniichan.

To tell the truth, the reason that I summoned oniichan was because there's something I want to earnestly request from oniichan…"

"… Request?"

What the heck.

I feel nothing but a bad presentiment.

If I felt like it, I could instantly break the cuffs on both my arms, but the worrying thing about these handcuffs… The chain that stretched from them seemed to be linked to the pet case over the table and it seems to be arranged so that, by mindlessly putting strength, the case will fall down.

What's inside the case is a very lovely kitty.

In other words… If I were to break out, there's a possibility that the kitty inside the case would get hurt.

This is really like my sister… It was an inhuman way of taking advantage of my softness.

"I say, oniichan. Not only the contract… I want oniichan to take this virginity too!"

Putting her hand inside her skirt, she said in a coquettish voice while taking off her panties.

… I'd say, right now, I am being approached by the ultimate choice.

Do I rather accept my fate and have a carnal relationship with my sister?

Or, in order to avoid the worst case scenario of having my first experience being a reverse rape from my sister, do I hurt a helpless kitty?

Sure enough, don't either of them spell my end as a human(?)?

If possible… I'd want to be spared from both of them.

"W-what are you doing, little sister!?"

Then, when I was exposing the extraordinarily shameful appearance of having my trousers forcibly taken off by my real sister.

The ones who appeared then were Zonmi & Kyouko & Iris, the three girls who are set to become my wives in the future.

"… Tsk. Hindrances have come. Manami's house and this apartment are five kilometers apart. This means you too have improved your skills?"

Manami, cursing like that, placing her panties on the table, sent the monster girl trio a sharp glance.

"Manami-chan! Get away from Haru now! Haru's first is his childhood friend's, me!"

"… Nuh. Nephilim. Those were unpardonable words. The first to get betrothed to Chiharu was none other than me. So, 'tis natural! The one entitled to spend the first night with Chiharu is me!"

"Wait, please. What have you two been saying since a while ago?

The one who owns the privilege of Chiharu's first experience is none other than me, Chiharu's very first partner!"

"Tha-t's-why I told you before that the order of the contracts don't matter…"

"… If you go by that, I think that 'since I'm his childhood friend' lacks terribly in rationality as a claim."

"… Humph. Summarizing the opinions of ye two, then 'tis me who's entitled with the right to spend the first night with Chiharu."

"Excuse me~. Iris-chan. Could you please not get cocky just because your breasts have gotten a bit bigger~?"

"M-mammaries have nothing to do with this!?"

Grasping her own chest, Iris became red to the ears from embarrassment.

It's been a long time since us five met and then again it's as you see.

These girls… Didn't they come to save me!?

"Since it has come to this, the last resort. The right to snatch oniichan's first will go to the strongest girl!!"

"… What?"

"Roger. Those terms… I accept the challenge."

“Humph. Isn’t that the most appropriate?”

“So from now on a battle royal will start? Bring it on!”

“…”

There are many places I want to retort, but… For now, let me tell you one thing.

I think you had better learn to listen a bit more carefully to people’s opinions.

Thus, the battle of the immoral girls regarding my virginity (?) starts.

In the end, even if four years have passed, our relationship doesn’t seem to have changed greatly.

I, while sighing to the quarrel of the four girls, in order to protect the people dear to me and the world where the people dear to me live… From now on, I too decided to give my best.